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**MANIPULATION AND ACTUALIZATION IN  
" THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH**

**by**

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

There can no longer be any doubt that modern man has developed patterns of living that are emotionally, physically, and spiritually destructive of human personality. Research in the past several years reveals the extent to which increasing numbers of persons are crippled in their attempt to live meaningful and fulfilling lives.

At the same time that intensive research was being compiled on the aspects of illness and destructive patterns of living, research on health and fulfilling patterns of living has been minimal. Happily, in recent years more is available which should be utilized by the church. One area in which such research has been helpful is in the study of contrasting styles of manipulation and actualization.

### THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It has been the purpose of this study (1) to explore the patterns of manipulation found in both individuals and in the institution of the Christian Church; (2) to evaluate the dimensions of actualization found within both individuals and the institution of the Christian Church; (3) to suggest ways in which individuals and the institution of the church can grow from

patterns of manipulation to patterns of actualization.

Method of research. The most important research tool available to this writer has been the latest research done on manipulative patterns; this is the research compiled by Dr. Everett Shostrom at the Institute of Therapeutic Psychology in Santa Ana, California. The writer has been a member of this research team for the past four years. While the research for this paper has included the study of available literature, it has emphasized Shostrom's approach in such books as Man the Manipulator and Therapeutic Psychology as well as his unpublished manuscripts which were made available to this writer. Additional research was done through case studies and interviews, many of them from the author's church where experiments with the kinds of groups described later in this manuscript have been conducted.

With the approval of the author's guidance committee this dissertation incorporates a considerable portion of this writer's work published in The Manipulator and the Church (Abingdon Press, 1968).

Importance of the study. The Christian Church is in a time of radical turmoil. Research reveals that a revolution is taking place within the institution of the church. The revolution is a result of both sickness and health. One part of the revolution is a reaction against the patterns of sickness in the church which take the

forms of control, distrust, deception, and cynicism. This motivation for change can be seen as a deficiency motivation. Large numbers of laymen and ministers have a vague sense of uneasiness about their church and a pointed sense of frustration about their own lack of growth and joy in their church experience. Another part of the revolution in the church results from the present realities and the future possibilities of experiencing freedom, trust, honesty, and awareness. This motivation can be seen as a growth motivation.

Clearly there is a great need for the systematic study of the patterns in church life which either, on the one hand, intensify the deficiency or, on the other hand, contribute to the growth. One aspect of this crucial alternative is the contrast between factors which contribute to manipulation or to actualization. Churchmen and churches as institutions need honestly to grapple with those things within and between them which stifle growth and creativity.

Equally important as the discovery of manipulative patterns is the discovery of the possibility of actualizing patterns. The study attempts to present patterns which will lead to growth and fulfillment.

The study is meant to be used by both ministers and laymen in discussion groups as one way of identifying manipulation and discovering the possibility of

actualization.

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Manipulation. The practice of using control, distrust, deception, and cynicism in human relationships; the constant concealing of motives and emotions as a method of controlling others.

Manipulator. A person who exploits, uses, and/or controls himself and others as things in certain self-defeating ways; a person whose life style is characterized by control, distrust, deception, and cynicism. Identifiable forms of the manipulator are: the judge, the bully, the calculator, the dictator, the protector, the "nice guy," the "clinging vine," the weakling.

Manipulation vs. Games. Because there can be confusion between the concepts of manipulation, as developed by Shostrom, and games, as developed by Eric Berne,<sup>1</sup> it is important to contrast them. Manipulation is a system of games or a style of life as opposed to the playing of a single game. Unlike Berne's game player the manipulator uses his manipulations to control himself as well as others. Manipulation is seen as a pseudo-philosophy rather than as just a trick or game. Manipulation as a concept is far more comprehensive than games.

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<sup>1</sup>Eric Berne, Games People Play (New York: Grove Press, 1964).

Actualization. The practice of using freedom, trust, honesty, and awareness in realizing fuller potentialities of individuals and human relationships. This is a form of creative behavior which involves transparency in motives and emotions.

Actualizor. A person who appreciates himself and others as persons of unique potential, who expresses his actual self, who contributes to the fulfillment of others, and whose life style is characterized by freedom, trust, honesty, and awareness. Identifiable forms of the actualizor are: the expressor, assertor, respecter, leader, guide, carer, appreciator, empathizer.

Christian Actualization Group. A group in the church which employs the manipulation-actualization analysis of Shostrom. This type of group seeks to identify destructive or manipulative patterns and to enhance fulfillment or actualization patterns.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE DISSERTATION

The remainder of the dissertation is divided into six chapters.

Chapter two is an analysis of manipulation and actualization as concepts using primarily the works of Everett Shostrom and Abraham Maslow.

Chapter three is an analysis of various life styles found in American culture and identifies their manipulative

elements.

Chapter four identifies manipulative patterns of both laymen and ministers in the life of the church.

Chapter five describes the process of actualization from a Christian perspective.

Chapter six is a presentation of ways in which churches can evaluate their ministry in terms of actualization and manipulation. Also included in this chapter are ways in which churchmen can attempt to grow toward actualization.

Chapter seven is a description of a Christian actualization group with suggestions as to how such a group can be formed.

## CHAPTER II

### MANIPULATION AND ACTUALIZATION

#### MANIPULATION

Manipulation is a central problem in our time.

When man uses his capacity to manipulate himself and others his behavior calls forth descriptions such as this one, used by Eric Erickson, in speaking of man in the twentieth century:

Artful perverter of joy and keen exploiter of strength, man is the animal that has learned to survive "in a fashion," to multiply without foods for the multitudes, to grow up healthily without reaching personal maturity, to live well but without purpose, to invent ingeniously without aim, and to kill grandiosely without need.<sup>1</sup>

The extent of manipulation in the twentieth century and its effects of personality distortion and interpersonal conflict is revealed in the results of the research done by the staff of The Institute of Therapeutic Psychology in Santa Ana, California. The writer of this paper has participated in that work for the past four years.

The central focus of the research has been done in small groups and through the development and use of a personality test called, The Caring Relationship Inventory.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Eric Erickson, Insight and Responsibility (New York: Norton, 1964), p. 227.

<sup>2</sup>Everett Shostrom, Caring Relationship Inventory (San Diego: Educational and Industrial Testing Service, 1967).

Members of St. Paul's Methodist Church, Orange, California, the church served by the writer, took the original tests. The results of their tests, along with other selected groupings, became the basis of the statistical measurement of actualization and manipulation.

Results of this research will be referred to as specific examples from case histories of persons participating in Actualization Therapy are used to illustrate patterns of manipulative and actualizing behavior.

Everett Shostrom sees manipulation as a pervasive fact of every man's existence. He believes that each person is at the same time a recipient and a producer of manipulation. He says:

The manipulator is legion. He is all of us, consciously, subconsciously, or unconsciously employing all the phoney tricks we absorb between the cradle and the crematory to conceal the actual vital nature of ourselves and, in the process, reducing ourselves and our fellow man into things to be controlled.<sup>3</sup>

Although the study of manipulation is to some extent a disillusioning experience and might lead to cynicism about the condition and possibilities of man, Shostrom's work is considered by this writer to be what might be termed a "Psychology of Hope."

I believe that there is a parallel, as far as effect on persons who work in their fields, between

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<sup>3</sup>Everett Shostrom (Santa Ana, 1966. Unpublished Manuscripts.)



Moltmann in theology<sup>4</sup> and Shostrom in psychology. The principle in Shostrom's work that leads to hope is his study of health, or actualization, in at least an equal proportion to his study of manipulation or sickness.

Manipulating as defined by Shostrom, is done in many ways, and is outlined in figure one. Manipulating has to do with a style of life or a pattern of relating to oneself and others. Some of the styles of manipulating are: the Dictator, the Calculator, the Bully, and the Judge. These are active or top-dog methods of manipulating. Under-dog or passive methods of manipulation are: the Weakling, the Clinging Vine, the Nice Guy, and the Protector.

The Dictator manipulates by dominating, ordering, shaming, and blaming. The victim of the Dictator is usually the Weakling who is the polar opposite of the Dictator. The Weakling develops many techniques in dealing with the Dictator. Some of these methods are forgetting, not hearing, playing stupid and helpless.

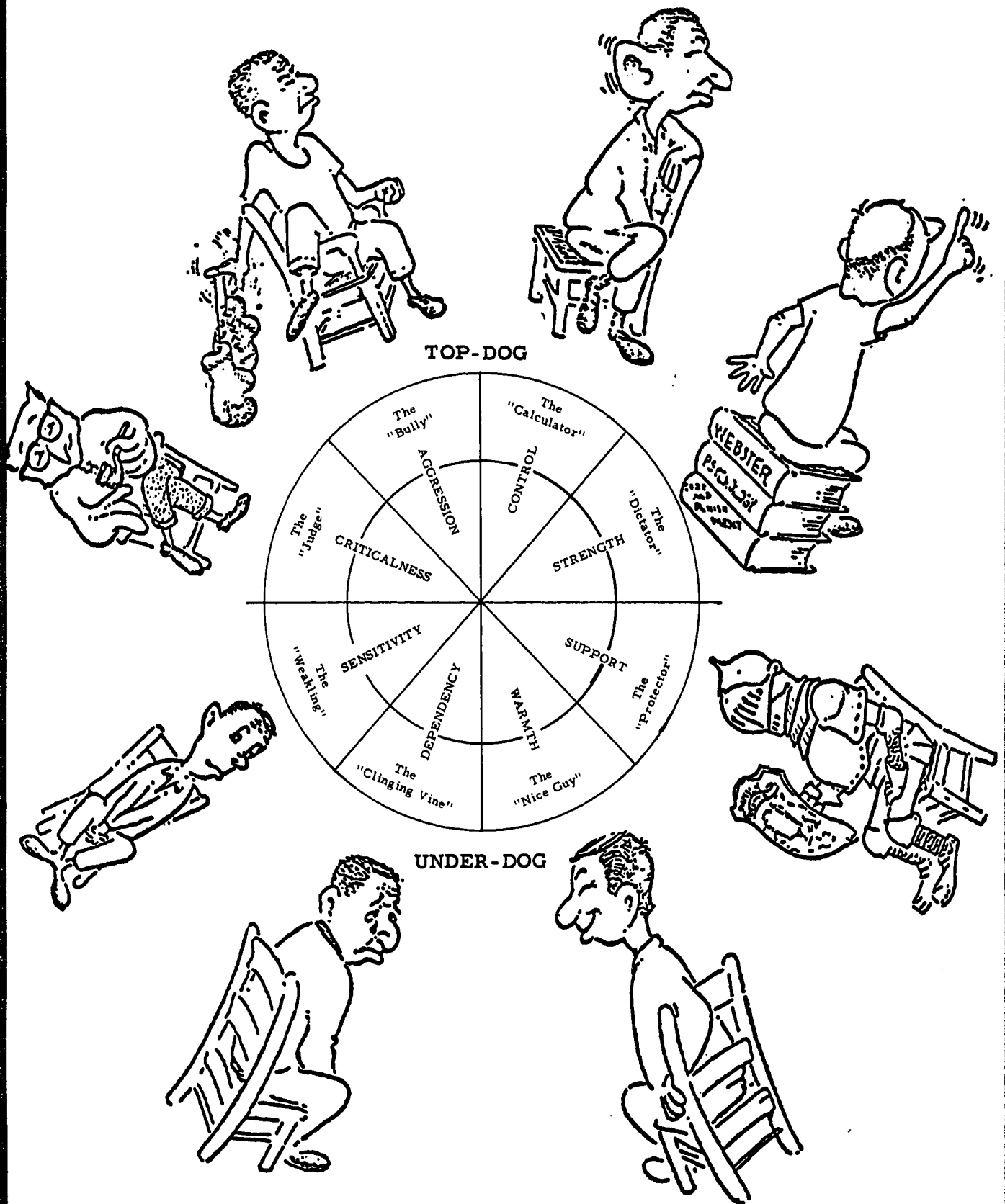
The Calculator Manipulator uses techniques of deception, distrust, lies. The Calculator is constantly trying to outwit and control other people. The Clinging Vine is the polar opposite of the Calculator. His manipulation is his dependency upon others. He is the parasite who will

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<sup>4</sup>Juergen Moltmann, Theology of Hope (New York: Harper and Row, 1967).

Figure 1

THE MANIPULATIVE TYPES



Copyright from MAN THE MANIPULATOR, The Inner Journey from Manipulation to Actualization, Everett L. Shostrom, Ph. D., Abingdon Press, New York-Nashville. 1967.

allow himself to be led and fooled as long as he is taken care of.

Look at two people who are calculating and dependent. They both seem to need each other. Without dependent people around, Calculator would have no one to compete with and control. The dependent person is not as stupid as he wants to appear. He simply lets Calculator do his work for him.<sup>5</sup>

Another of Shostrom's manipulative types is the Bully. The Bully's life style is to be cruel and unkind, sarcastic and destructively hostile. His manipulating opposite is the Nice Guy who is over loving, over agreeable and kills with kindness.

In one sense, Nice Guy is much harder to cope with than the Bully. You can't fight a nice guy! Curiously in any conflict with the Bully, the nice guy almost always wins.<sup>6</sup>

We shall document in our chapter on the Manipulating Minister that the Nice Guy style is one of his common forms.

Another manipulative style, also a form of the minister's manipulating, is that of Judge. The Judge manipulator distrusts everybody, is blameful, resentful, and slow to forgive. The manipulative opposite of Judge is the Protector. The Protector is always non-judgemental. His style is never to criticize, he is always over-sympathetic and refuses to allow those he protects to grow up

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<sup>5</sup>Shostrom (Unpublished Manuscripts), loc. cit.

<sup>6</sup>Everett Shostrom, Man the Manipulator (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967), p. 38.

and stand alone. The Protector does not trust the other person to be able to cope with his life situation. The minister who wants to protect his congregation from life manipulates by allowing only safe and non-controversial matters to be dealt with in the church.

Shostrom traces five probable causes of these various styles of manipulation. The first cause of manipulation is developed from the theories of Frederick Perls. This cause is man's conflict between self-support and environmental support.

Not trusting himself for self-support, man believes in trusting others. Yet, not trusting others completely, modern man manipulates the other in an effort to support himself in the process. It is as if he rides the coat-tail of the other person and then attempts to steer him at the same time. . . . The word that describes this cause of manipulation is distrust. We cannot trust the organismic balance each of us has, which would allow us to lead our lives simply and feelingly without controlling ourselves.<sup>7</sup>

A second cause for manipulation in modern man is traced by Shostrom in the work of Erich Fromm. Fromm believes that the ultimate relationship between man and man is love and that this love is knowing a human being as he is and loving his essence. The cause of manipulation in this instance is the failure to accept and love one's own self or the self of another. We shall relate this loveless cause of manipulation to the minister's tendency to be

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<sup>7</sup>Shostrom (Unpublished Manuscripts), loc. cit.

perfectionistic and therefore unaccepting of himself and others.

We seem to assume that the more perfect we are, the more flawless, the more we will be loved. Actually the reverse is true. The more willing you are to admit your weaknesses as a human being, the more lovable you are. But love is an achievement that is difficult to attain, and so the alternative of the manipulator is a desperate one, that of complete power and control over the other person.<sup>8</sup>

Another suggestion for the cause of manipulation can be seen in the work of Bugenthal and other existentialists. All men face risk in the very act of being. The manipulator tries to take the risks out of life. He tries to program himself and his relationships.

The number and the potentialities of the things that may happen to us at any moment are beyond our knowing. Modern man feels powerless when he faces this existential situation. -- According to Bugenthal the passive manipulator says, "Since I can't control everything that will determine what will happen to me, I have no control at all."

The active manipulator on the other hand, victimizes people, capitalizing on their powerlessness and gaining gratification by exercising control over them.<sup>9</sup>

Another cause of manipulation can be seen in the works of Haley, Berne, and Glasser. This cause is the fear of closeness. Haley has discovered in work with schizophrenics that they are intensely afraid of personal relationships and constantly try to avoid them.<sup>10</sup> Berne theorizes that people play games to regulate their emotions

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Jay Haley, Strategies of Psychotherapy (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1963), p. 18.

and the emotions of others in an attempt to avoid intimacy.<sup>11</sup> In the chapter on the Manipulating Minister we shall discuss some of the minister's games. Glasser suggests that one of the basic fears of people is their fear of involvement.<sup>12</sup> The fear of intimacy or the fear of personal involvement is a cause of manipulation and leads to game playing or to relating in a ritualistic way.

The fifth suggested cause of manipulation is found in the work of Albert Ellis. The theory of Ellis is that each of us learns, in the process of growing up, some absolutely illogical assumptions about living. "One of them is, that it is a dire necessity to be loved and approved by everyone."<sup>13</sup> The passive manipulator is one who will refuse to be truthful with others because he is trying to please everyone. This desire to please everyone is the basis of the manipulator's deception.

The person who is manipulating may be seen to fall into three manipulative systems.

1. The active manipulator attempts to control others by active methods. He avoids facing his own weakness by assuming the role of the powerful one in the relationship. Usually he does this with some institutional affiliation or rank (parent, top

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<sup>11</sup>Eric Berne, Games People Play (New York: Grove Press, 1964).

<sup>12</sup>William Glasser, Reality Therapy (New York: Harper and Row, 1965).

<sup>13</sup>Albert Ellis, Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy (New York: Lyle Stuart, 1962).

sergeant, teacher, boss). He plays top-dog and gains gratification but capitalizes on others' feelings of powerlessness to gain control over them. He uses techniques such as creating obligations, expectations, pulling rank. . . .

2. The passive manipulator is the reverse of the active. He decides, since he cannot control life, that he will give up and allow the active manipulator to control him. He feigns helplessness and stupidity and plays the "under-dog." Whereas the active manipulator wins by winning, the passive manipulator, paradoxically, wins by losing. By allowing the active manipulator to do his thinking and his work for him, in a sense, he wins out over the top-dog by his passivity. . . .

3. The competitive manipulator sees life as a constant game of winning and losing in which he has to be the vigilant fighter. To him, life is a battle, and all others are competitors or enemies, real or potential. He sees all men as "racing dogs" in the game of life. He alternates between top-dog and under-dog methods, and so may be seen as somewhat of a mixture between the active and the passive manipulator.<sup>14</sup>

The manipulator's philosophy and systems reveal that he regards himself and others as objects. His basic desire as an active manipulator is to gain and maintain control at all costs. For the passive manipulator the goal is never to offend. Disguising his real feelings is a primary characteristic of a manipulator.

The following is an analysis of the four fundamental characteristics of manipulation. They are deception, unawareness, control, and cynicism.

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<sup>14</sup>Shostrom, Man the Manipulator, op. cit., p. 45.

### Deception

The person who is more manipulative than actualizing is basically deceptive. Shostrom defines him in this manner:

The Manipulator uses tricks, techniques, and maneuvers. He puts on an act, plays roles to create an impression. His expressed feelings are deliberately chosen to fit the occasion.<sup>15</sup>

The manipulative personality seldom reveals expressions of true selfhood and rarely calls on others to express their true selfhood.

An illustration of this is in the following dialogue of two young adults who were participating in an Actualization Therapy session. This was their sixth session together.

She: You know you want everybody to think that you're just hot stuff. Quit trying to impress us and be yourself.

He: Just what in the hell do you mean by that?

She: The rest of you might not know it but Bob and I went out the other night. I've just caught on that he does the same thing in the group that he did with me.

He: Now wait a minute, what happens to us outside the group is a private thing and just between us!

Therapist: Looks like Bob is scared about something.

She: You bet he is. He lied to me twice just to impress me. First he told me he was an executive when he's just a clerk. Then he had the nerve to tell me that he owned this fancy car when he just rented it.

He: How did you find that out?

Therapist: Oh, you're just concerned to find out where your technique went wrong. What's the reason for putting on this big act?

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<sup>15</sup>Shostrom (Unpublished Manuscripts), loc. cit.



Attempts at deception in the expression or the withholding of feelings are other methods which the manipulating personality adopts. This is not to say, however, that an actualizing person expresses all of his feelings all of the time. The motivation of disclosing or withholding feelings is the criterion that reveals actualizing or manipulative behavior.

An illustration of the deliberate expression of feelings and attitudes that are not actually held by the expressor can be seen in this statement by a former minister.

I feel like I kissed a lot of fannies when I was a minister. Always being nice to those bastards. It just makes me sick to think about the way I used to kiss up to everybody.

Ho, ho, ho, but when I think about all that baloney I used to give them from the pulpit I guess it's about even.

When asked by the Therapist, "What do you mean baloney from the pulpit?" he responded, "I mean all that garbage that I thought they wanted and shoved at them even though I didn't for a minute believe it myself."

Deception is not always manipulative. It is actualizing to be deceptive in some circumstances where a person needs to be protected from the truth in order that greater values might be achieved. An example of this is the decision at which a doctor arrived after removing a young woman's leg.

It is definite that the organ removed was malignant. Indications are that she has less than two years to live. Knowing her background and her

tendency toward depression I have decided that to share this with her now would endanger her will to live.

Deception becomes manipulative when it grows out of motives that seek to control or impress persons. Love and growth are the motivations for the rare instances of actualizing deception.

### Unawareness

The second characteristic of the person who is more manipulative than actualizing, as stated by Shostrom, is that of unawareness. He says:

The manipulator is unaware of the really important concerns of living. He has "tunnel vision." He sees only what he wishes to see and hears only what he wishes to hear.<sup>16</sup>

I take issue with Shostrom when he suggests that only deadness and boredom are a part of the life style of a person who is exhibiting the manipulative characteristic of unawareness. In my counseling experience some of the more blatantly unaware manipulators were lively, excited, extremely motivated and aggressive individuals.

An illustration of this is the relationship between a man in his early forties and his wife. He was very capable in his business. He spent exceptionally long hours at his job, was active in his community and expressed interest in a wide variety of concerns. And yet he was

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<sup>16</sup>Shostrom, Man the Manipulator, op. cit., p. 50.

totally unaware of his wife's inner feelings about the way he was treating her.

She: You have been treating me like a child.

He: What?

She: I mean it. You treat me like I was a little kid.

He: That's ridiculous!

She: Every time I want some money to do some little thing, even if it's for the kids, I've got to ask you, consult you, beg you. You make me feel like a little kid asking for a nickel for a popsicle.

It was apparent to me in our counseling relationship that she had been trying to send this message to him for several weeks. This man revealed the style of the unaware manipulator in that his behavior was based on uninformed assumptions concerning the feelings of others about him.

He: Now wait a minute. You know damn well that I'm doing this for us. So we can have something when we are older. I'm keeping a tight rein on things now so that we have something when the kids are ready for college. I make quite a few sacrifices you know and now this is the way you react.

She: That's just it. You are keeping a tight rein on things. Why couldn't it be us for a change. When have we ever talked about our future and the kids going to college? You make all the decisions without even asking me for the way I feel, then you accuse me of nagging when I don't do handstands in carrying them out.

He: This is the first time I knew you felt like that! Why didn't you say something. I thought you wanted me to take care of things.

She: I've felt for a long time that you're being shook up about the future was keeping us from living now.

The manipulator is often not only unaware of the feelings of others, he is unaware of his own. He can manipulate himself by cutting himself off from his own deepest feelings. Thayer Greene makes the point that the

style of life in urban culture and the value structures that have grown up in a speeded up existence have cut down the possibilities for receptiveness, openness, and letting be or non-striving.<sup>17</sup> These are essentials for the individual process of awareness. Greene believes that the pressures that lead to unawareness are especially strong on young men in American culture. He says:

The drive toward activity, achievement, mastery of the outer world, is a central characteristic of the young male making his mark. He is little given to meditation and contemplation, which look suspiciously unproductive in a culture where what and how much one does is the common standard for who one is. The measuring stick of personal worth by which most of us have been taught to judge ourselves is calibrated to the standards of activity and visible achievement. Hidden but fruitful inner growth and the capacity for letting be are dimensions of human experience that do not lend themselves to clear and easy measurement and are therefore largely undervalued.<sup>18</sup>

The problem of unawareness is certainly not limited to the more manipulative personality. The manipulator's unawareness, in contrast to the actualizer's unawareness, is sometimes intentional. The manipulator will not look at that which he does not want to see and he will not let himself hear that which he does not want to hear. He is intentional in some of his unawareness. The following example, from the author's counseling experience, is that of a father who came out of the probation department after

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<sup>17</sup>Thayer Greene, Modern Man in Search of Manhood (New York: Association Press, 1967).

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

his son had been brought in for petty theft:

Father: Now this is the last time we are ever coming here. You are not going to do this again. What in the world did you take that stuff for? You have everything you need. Everything you have ever asked for I have bought for you. I would have bought those stupid golf clubs if you had just asked.

Son: You know, Dad, this is the first time we've gone somewhere together this year?

Father: Well, I'll tell you something for sure, we had better never have to come here again. You know I've got a lot of pressures on me and that I'm far too busy for this. You've got to knock off these crazy things you're doing and hit those books if you're going to get into Med School.

Son: You know, Dad, I don't think I want to go into medicine. I don't think I could make it anyhow.

Father: You know I've always counted on you being a doctor. You are going to be the one in this family who has a good education. You are going to make us proud of you. How ridiculous. Of course, you can make it. I'm going to have your mother keep a closer watch on you. You'd better get with it starting now.

It is impossible to prove intention with regard to the father's unawareness and lack of response to the real feelings of the son. But the pattern is that of a refusal to listen to and to feel what the son is experiencing on the part of the father.

### Control

The fourth characteristic of manipulation is control. Shostrom defines it in this manner: "The manipulator plays life like a game of chess. He appears relaxed, yet he is very controlled and controlling, concealing his

motives from his 'opponent.'<sup>19</sup>

The personality that is more manipulating than actualizing is one that is less spontaneous and less free-flowing with feeling and response. An example of this is found in one family counseling session. In this family there is a nineteen year old son, a seventeen year old son and a nine year old daughter. The parents are on the verge of divorce but have been on the verge for the past eight years. Both of the sons have tried to convince their mother that she ought to leave the father. This session came the day after a terrible argument in which the oldest son and the father came very close to a fist-fight. The father has promised to kill the son if he lifts his hand against him, yet has a way of taunting the son for being afraid of him. I had been called to the home to "straighten out" the family by the father.

Counselor: Well, Harry called me over to see if we could find a way out of this mess that we are now in with each other. You all look pretty miserable and I can just feel the tension in the room. I would like to suggest we do something that might help us get started on recognizing where we are and hopefully to begin to move toward something better for all of us.

I want each of you to draw a picture of the family. Be sure to put yourself into the picture and try to draw what's going on here. We are not looking for art here. I just want you to draw a picture of the family as you see it.

Father: I don't see the sense in this. I thought you

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<sup>19</sup>Shostrom (Unpublished Manuscripts), loc. cit.

were going to come in and tell us how to straighten this out. I need some help on this, Reverend.

Daughter: I don't know what you mean. How can you draw the family?

Counselor: Just try to draw something about how it is to live in this house.

The members of the family draw pictures and share them:

Oldest Son: This family is a battlefield. There's always a war going on here. And he always gets the war going. (Points to the father).

Second Son: I have drawn our house here with bars on the windows. We may as well live in a prison. Dad is the jailer or the warden. He is with the key. He's got us locked up but if he just eased up on us he could let us out.

Father: That's a fine thing to say about your father. If you think this house is a prison that's just great. A lot of thanks I get for sweating my head off to provide it.

Daughter: My picture is me on my bed crying. Everybody is always mad around here. Why can't we ever have any fun. (She starts crying).

Mother: In my picture Harry and I are going out different doors and there is a big angry cloud right over the house. This part shows us all around the table with ugly faces because that's where we seem to fight the most.

Father: Well here's mine. This is why I think we are having so much trouble around here. The family is like an army regiment. Here is the commanding officer -- me. Here's the second in command -- mother. Here are the troops -- you kids. Everybody is disobeying the commanding officer. If you would just make a little effort to listen to the things I tell you to do I wouldn't get mad and we'd all get along better. If all of you really want to have it peaceful and happy around here why do you defy me all the time? Just cooperate a little and we will begin to get along.

The more we shared together the more evident it became that the father had a need to set up battle lines and then demand unconditional surrender from the other members of the family.

The manipulative personality is one that seeks to

establish the agendas for other people's lives. Creating expectations and closely watching the schedules of others are means of manipulative control.

One man participating in a therapy group was a department supervisor in one of the divisions of the state government. His reaction to a course he was required to take in "sensitivity training" was, "It's a brainwashing program of manipulation." He felt that new and sophisticated techniques of control were presented under the guise of helping the supervisors become more productive. He felt that it was using psychology for manipulation. He said, "The truth is we are trying to tell people what to do and make them think that it was their idea in the first place."

Manipulative control is as old as human history. What is new are the techniques now available for control. What is even more recent is the systemization of manipulation as the above illustration demonstrates.

### Cynicism

The fourth characteristic of the manipulative personality is cynicism. According to Shostrom:

The manipulator is basically distrusting of himself and others. Down deep he doesn't trust human nature. He sees relationships with humans as having two alternatives: to control or to be controlled.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Shostrom, Man the Manipulator, op. cit., p. 51.



The manipulator is often a person who projects his own lack of trustworthiness onto others. A group of employers came to an actualization session to increase their effectiveness as human beings and to increase their abilities to be helpful in employer-employee relationships. The following are some responses from the opening session:

Therapist: Let's just get out before us what we really think about the people who work for us. Just give one word or one sentence around the group. What do you think about the people who work for you?

One: They're just people.

Two: Production units.

Three: Workers.

Four: Persons with problems.

Five: You've got to watch them.

Therapist: Isn't it interesting the different ways in which we see people who have the same role.

The session was taped and later played back to the group. The therapist worked on a one-to-one basis with respondent number five.

Therapist: Did you catch your feelings about the people who work for you?

Five: Yes, what about them?

Therapist: Why do you have to watch them all the time?

Five: Simple. They'll take advantage of you if you don't.

Therapist: How do you know this?

Five: When I was a boy I worked at picking cotton. We got paid by the pound. I used to throw stems and leaves in the bag whenever I could. Anyone will do the same thing if you give them half a chance.

We must recognize in our work with persons whose manipulations of self and others spring from cynicism that sometimes the cynicism has resulted from extremely

difficult personal experience. It is not enough to simply condemn cynicism, we must attempt to understand the roots of this attitude or stance toward life. An illustration of such cynicism can be seen in a woman who came into an Actualization Group and revealed very negative feelings toward men. She was seductive yet castrating in her response to the male members of the group.

Male: You are really one big tease. I really want to get to know you. I've almost asked you out several times. But every time I'm about to, you turn me off.

She: That's your hang-up, Junior.

Therapist: Junior?

She: Well, he seems like a little kid to me. If he wanted to ask me out why didn't he just go ahead and do it? I would have said "no" anyhow.

Therapist: Let's go around the group and ask the men how they think you feel about them. Men how does she relate to you?

Male One: She competes. She wants to show me she is just as smart, just as capable as I am.

Male Two: She sure doesn't let any of us get away with anything. There's no doubt she is the sharpest dresser in the group. She works extra hard on her appearance yet she acts like we are all after her. She's very suspicious of me.

Male Three: She, no I won't hide by feeding the answer back to the therapist. You want to put me down. Why?

In a later session this young woman revealed her intense distrust of men which was rooted in two bitter experiences. One was with a step-father who molested her, and the second with a fiance who she thought had used her.

The person who manipulates others believes that others are usually trying to use him or take advantage of him and feels that there is no alternative other than

striking the first blow. His motto might be seen as, "Do unto others before they do unto you."

The cynical manipulator is sometimes a person who has been hurt so badly that he is afraid to take the risk of loving and committing himself to an ongoing relationship in which there is honesty and trust. The manipulative personality can use his knowledge about a person's needs for love and yet use it in a way that evades responsibility for doing the work of loving. Reuel Howe has focused on this tendency to use our knowledge about love to evade responsibility to be loving in this passage:

We can be so frightened by the risks of expressing love that we may turn away from those who need our love and have a right to expect it from us. How much easier and safe it is to know about God, and to confine this meaning to the sanctuary and the study group!<sup>21</sup>

Manipulative cynicism can lead to always playing it safe. One may become increasingly unwilling to take risks in relationships where trust is required. People are often warned, "Don't get involved with that person now." Reuel Howe suggests that cynicism may lead to moralistic ways of playing it safe in religion. Joseph Fletcher has commented on the need to be more flexible in relationships with persons rather than rigidly adhering to absolute

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<sup>21</sup>Reuel Howe, Herein Is Love (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1961), p. 23.

rules.<sup>22</sup> The cynical person is distrusting of the motives and the behavior of others.

Along with deception, unawareness, and control, cynicism is one of the characteristics of manipulation which, when incorporated into a man's relationships causes him to live in a non-actualizing way.

### ACTUALIZATION

The alternative to a manipulative style of life is an actualizing style of life. The concept of actualization is one that is basically the result of the work of Abraham Maslow. The basic assumptions of his point of view are:

1. We have, each of us, an essentially biologically based inner nature, which is to some degree "natural," intrinsic, given, and, in a certain limited sense, unchangeable, or, at least, unchanging.

2. Each person's inner nature is in part unique to himself and in part species-wide.

3. It is possible to study this inner nature scientifically and to discover what it is like--(not invent-discover).

4. This inner nature, as much as we know of it so far, seems not to be intrinsically evil, but rather either neutral or positively "good." What we call evil behavior appears most often to be a secondary reaction to frustration of this intrinsic nature.

5. Since this inner nature is good or neutral rather than bad, it is best to bring it out and to encourage it rather than to suppress it. If it is permitted to guide our life we grow healthy, fruitful, and happy.

6. If this essential core of the person is denied or suppressed, he gets sick sometimes in obvious ways, sometimes in subtle ways, sometimes immediately, sometimes later.

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<sup>22</sup>Joseph Fletcher, Situation Ethics (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966).

7. This inner nature is not strong and overpowering and unmistakable like the instincts of animals. It is weak and delicate and subtle and easily overcome by habit, cultural pressure, and wrong attitudes toward it.

8. Even though weak, it rarely disappears in the normal person--perhaps not even in the sick person. Even though denied, it persists underground forever pressing for actualization.

9. Somehow, these conclusions must all be articulated with the necessity of discipline, deprivation, frustration, pain, and tragedy. To the extent that these experiences reveal and foster and fulfill our inner nature, to that extent they are desirable experiences.<sup>23</sup>

These principles of Maslow's grow out of his research into what he terms "self-actualizing persons." Most psychology is based upon the study of unhealthy persons or sick behavior and sick attitudes. Maslow has offered an alternative viewpoint. His principles are predicated on the idea that we can best understand psychological wholeness by studying the behavior and life style of those persons who have achieved a high degree of wholeness and personal fulfillment. In his study of wholeness or healthy persons Maslow is not trying to discredit previous research made by what we might term the "psychology of sickness." Maslow is trying to present a balance. He says:

This point of view in no way denies the usual Freudian picture. But it does add to it and supplement it. To oversimplify the matter somewhat, it is as if Freud supplied to us the sick half of psychology

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<sup>23</sup>Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1962), pp. 3-4.

and we must now fill it out with the healthy half. Perhaps this health psychology will give us more possibility for controlling and improving our lives and for making ourselves better people. Perhaps this will be more fruitful than asking how to get unsick.<sup>24</sup>

Maslow feels that there has been so little research done on the nature of growth that it is a concept that cannot even be defined properly. His studies reveal, however, that growth rather than the satisfaction of basic needs is the motivating force of self-actualization.

So far as motivational status is concerned, healthy people have sufficiently gratified their basic needs for safety, belongingness, love, respect and self esteem so that they are motivated primarily by trends to self-actualization (defined as ongoing actualization of potentials, capacities and talents, as fulfillment of mission, (or call, fate, destiny, or vocation), as a fuller knowledge of, and acceptance of, the person's own intrinsic nature, as an unceasing trend toward unity, integration or synergy within the person).<sup>25</sup>

Shostrom, building on the work of Maslow, has defined the actualizing person as, "an individual who appreciates himself and others as persons of unique worth and potential."<sup>26</sup>

It is important to recognize that all of us are to some extent actualizers and to some extent manipulators. No man is free from manipulation and probably no man is incapable of at least a degree of actualization.

The person who is more actualizing than manipulative

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>26</sup>Shostrom (Unpublished Manuscripts), loc. cit.

is one who has sufficiently gratified his basic needs, is motivated by growth, is an expressor of his actual self and calls out the expression of the unique selfhood of others. Meister Eckhart, the great Christian Mystic, expressed it this way:

That I am a man,  
this I share with other men.  
That I see and hear and that  
I eat and drink  
is what all animals do likewise.  
But that I am I is only mine  
and belongs only to me  
and to nobody else.<sup>27</sup>

The actualizing person has a sense of his own uniqueness and worth and the uniqueness and worth of others. Martin Buber has expressed it in these words:

Every person born into this world represents something new, something that never existed before, something original and unique. It is the duty of every person . . . to know and consider that he is unique in the world in his particular character and that there has never been anyone like him in the world. Every single man is a new thing, and is called upon to fulfill his particularity in this world. Every man's foremost task is the actualization of his unique, unprecedented and never recurring potentialities, and not the repetition of something that another, and be it even the greatest, has already achieved.<sup>28</sup>

Maslow has listed thirteen characteristics of actualizing persons or those who appreciate the uniqueness and worth of self and others. These characteristics are:

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<sup>27</sup>Meister Eckhart, Fragments, quoted in Erich Fromm, Man for Himself (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1947), p. 38.

<sup>28</sup>Martin Buber, The Way of Man (Chicago: Wilcox and Follett, 1951), p. 16.

Superior perception of reality.  
 Increased acceptance of self, of others, and of nature.  
 Increased spontaneity.  
 Increase in problem centering.  
 Increased detachment and desire for privacy.  
 Increased autonomy, and resistance to enculturation.  
 Greater freshness of appreciation, and richness of emotional reaction.  
 Higher frequency of peak experiences.  
 Increased identification with the human species.  
 Changed or improved human interpersonal relations.  
 More democratic character structure.  
 Greatly increased creativeness.  
 Certain changes in the value system.<sup>29</sup>

Shostrom has developed what he refers to as the four fundamental characteristics of actualization. They are: honesty, awareness, freedom, and trust. These characteristics are the alternatives to the manipulating characteristics of deception, unawareness, control, and cynicism.

### Honesty

The first characteristic of the actualizing person is that of honesty. Shostrom defines it in this manner: "The actualizer is able honestly to be his feelings, whatever they may be. He is characterized by candidness, expression, and genuinely being himself."<sup>30</sup>

The honesty dimension of the actualizer's personality has to do with his ability to "disclose" himself.

The emphasis here is on the actualizer's ability to

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<sup>29</sup>Maslow, op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>30</sup>Shostrom, Man the Manipulator, op. cit., p. 50.



communicate his feelings honestly in the appropriate place. This does not mean he blurts out everything he feels or goes around compulsively sharing all the mistakes of his past history. All persons are faced with the need to be authentic and transparent. Each person, to some extent, has the ability to choose whether he will conceal his authentic being behind the various masks and roles that are available to him, or whether he will permit his fellow man to see and to know him as he is.

This honesty is based upon the person's ability to come to terms with his past, existentially. This does not mean that he must share all of this past with others, although he might choose to do so. An example of a person who moved to actualization as he struggled to be more honest was a man who had loudly proclaimed his wife's guilt and his own innocence in the break-up of their marriage:

Husband: You know it just came to me the other night how hard I was trying to convince all of you that my wife was all to blame for our divorce. I wanted so badly for others to know I was right and she was wrong.

Man One: That's exactly how I felt when my wife and I split up.

Man Two: What have you decided about it?

Husband: I don't know. I'm really kind of afraid to look at it.

Therapist: If you could make the fear come true what would happen?

Husband: I'd have to admit that I was some to blame and then I'd need forgiveness. I've never been able to say I'm sorry. (Tears begin to come.)

Man Three: What if she was here now? Let's imagine I'm her. What do you want to say to me?

Husband: I know I'm to blame too, but I could never be big enough to admit it. I know I hurt you bad but I had to keep claiming you were hurting me so I wouldn't have to admit it to you or to myself.

The person who is more actualizing than manipulative is more genuine in his expression of feelings. He communicates both his anger and his tenderness and care in the appropriate time and to the appropriate persons. The actualizing person recognizes that pretending with himself and others carries with it a tremendous price in personal health and interpersonal relationships. The actualizing person senses that deception and concealment is not a valid state of living. Rather, self-disclosure in the appropriate places and honestly being one's feelings contributes most to personal well being.

A person loses meaning to the extent that he conceals his true identity from himself and from others. A woman whose image of herself was that of an evil person, and who claimed outwardly to be the most moral of persons, is an example of this.

Woman: Things have really deteriorated for me during these past weeks.

Therapist: What's breaking down?

Woman: I can't keep it up. You know I'm president of my church woman's group. I'm supposed to be the model of the good mother, yet I have all these horrible thoughts. I just can't stand my husband any more. I never really did love him. I guess I don't love anyone anymore. My daughter doesn't even come to see me after all I did for her. I'm so resentful, and I know that's sinful. I've always been such a selfish person but I've tried to cover up by doing for others. I guess I'm just sick and tired of pretending that everything's all right

when it isn't. I don't know what's going to happen to me.

Therapist: Do your husband and daughter know anything of the way you feel about them?

Woman: Of course not. Nobody knows the way I feel and nobody ever will.

A person who is estranged from others and distrusts them to the point of misleading them into thinking that they know him, when in fact, he has intentionally hidden himself, loses immeasurably in depth. Life becomes for him more and more of a masquerade. Sidney Jourard reminds us:

Man, perhaps alone of all living forms, is capable of being one thing and seeming from his actions and talk to be something else. Not even those animals and insects which nature expertly camouflages can do this seemingly at will; they do it reflexly.<sup>31</sup>

One minister in an actualization group reported that in a particular service he felt that he should manufacture a dramatic conversion experience in order to be accepted and have status with a particular group. All the other members of the group could testify to a certain time and place when they had had a dramatic experience of "the Holy Spirit." When it came his time to speak he said he made a significant breakthrough into his ability to be a more honest and actualizing person. He confessed in a halting voice that he had no such dramatic and once and for all experience. He said that he did feel that the

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<sup>31</sup>Sidney Jourard, The Transparent Self (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964), p. 2.

Spirit was seeking to convert him, constantly seeking to help him change for the better, and participating in his growth. This illustration points out the pressures that we may feel are manipulating us into being dishonest about our religious and other experiences.

The focus must be on the freedom to share honestly according to the norm of love. To share what will only hurt the other person, even though it is scrupulously honest, would be invalid. The actualizer has no compulsion to be honest so that he can hurt others. His honesty is motivated by the values of love and growth.

### Awareness

The second characteristic of the actualizer as defined by Shostrom is awareness. Of this characteristic Shostrom writes: "The actualizer fully looks and listens to himself and others. He is fully aware of nature, art, music, and the other real dimensions of living."<sup>32</sup>

The other dimensions that this writer would include under the characteristic of awareness are: awareness of the uniqueness and potentials of one's self, awareness of the uniqueness and potentials of others, awareness of the transcendent or creating power.

Awareness is certainly no once-and-for-all state.

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<sup>32</sup>Shostrom, Man the Manipulator, op. cit., p. 50.

It can not easily be related to the knowing of facts. Awareness has as much to do with feelings as it has to do with knowledge. A statement of awareness was made by a young man in an actualization session:

Yesterday while I was driving my truck on the same run I have made five days a week for the last four years, something happened that I just have to share with you. Everything was the same, yet everything was different because something about me was different. I came to the crest of this big hill like I always do and I was following the flight of this hawk all the way up the hill. At the top he came real close. Just gliding along, I could see his individual feathers. There was something beautiful about him that I can't explain. I thought, "He's really doing what he does well. I mean he's an expert and he knows it." Well it hit me that I'm doing better at what I do now. I mean being a person. Maybe its been talking things through, with you people. I know you care about me. I know you care about this. And best of all I am coming to know that someone else that I didn't even believe existed before cares about me. I don't have to make it by myself anymore. Things look better outside because I feel a heck of a lot better inside. I know I've got a long way to go but something is happening to me.

### Freedom

The third characteristic of the actualizing life is that of freedom. Shostrom says of this: "The actualizer is spontaneous. He has the freedom to be and to express his potentials. He is master of his life, a subject and not a puppet or object."<sup>33</sup>

The actualizer's freedom is not simply freedom from external restraints but freedom to live out the

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

possibilities of his unique and unprecedented life. This actualizing freedom is freedom to be for others, to care, to express appreciation, to accept responsibility for one's historical situation, and to make a difference in changing one's environment into the creation that it was intended to be. An example of a person who expresses this actualizing freedom is a man who is a former alcoholic and is now confined to a wheelchair. After a session in an actualization group he made an appointment for a one-to-one relationship. In that confrontation he said:

I just made up my mind that I can't wait around anymore just hoping that something will happen and that I will get back to my former state of health. That's something that I am just going to be powerless to change. I've been moaning about what I don't have and can't do. At the same time I failed to appreciate what I do have and to use what I still have. I'm going to quit vegetating in that bed and I'm going to go out and be with people. I can do something about changing my attitude so that my wife and kids can start enjoying life again. I don't have much left, can't read, can't walk, can't lift anything, but I'm the guy that can do something about what I feel, and I feel optimistic for the first time in a long, long while.

The person who is more actualizing than manipulative is more spontaneous in his relationships and is more open to change. An example of this spontaneous and open stance to life is the seventy-four year old missionary who moved to our community and began to participate in some of the actualization groups in St. Paul's United Methodist Church. At seventy-four he set out to learn the Spanish language so that he could communicate with the Spanish speaking

people in our community. While he was learning the language he invited some of these people to study English with him. Soon he had formed a teenage club and was involving teenagers in learning how to make speeches. Here was an Anglo who was accepted by the Mexican-American community because of his openness to change and growth, his genuine interest in what was going on about him, his sensitivity to human need and his freedom to plunge into uncharted experiences.

The actualizing person is characterized by freedom in that he is less dependent than the manipulative personality on rigid patterns of being and relating that preclude change. The freedom of the actualizing person stems from his realization that all persons are "thous" and are not puppets for manipulating, or objects for controlling, but subjects for acting and responding, for feeling and for being.

The freedom of the person who is more actualizing is revealed in his capacity to experience and express in an appropriate and mutually helpful way the fundamental feelings of anger, fear, hurt, love, and trust. The actualizing person is not a compulsive expressor, he is a choosing expressor. He chooses to express feelings not for control or impression but for the motivation of love and growth.

An actualizing expression of anger can be seen in

the response of a new church executive during a meeting he had organized which was attended by less than half the persons who made reservations. He waited until the ministers were alone in their group. Then he asked permission of the discussion leader to make a statement.

Men I've got to get something off my chest. I'm so damn mad I don't know what to do. We had 280 reservations to this thing and only 111 showed up. Now some of you came through with what you said you would. You others who have let all of us down know who you are. Let's get with it. I'm frankly embarrassed. We tried to get the best speakers possible. We've asked people to give up their time to prepare a meal. This isn't fair to anyone and I'm steamed up over it.

One minister responded and seemed to reflect the feelings of many in the room:

You know, I really think this is something. We haven't had a District Superintendent level with us on the way he felt in a long time. I appreciate your honest sharing with us even though it has to be some negative reaction that some of us certainly deserve, including me.

Freedom is that which is really a spirit or stance toward life. It is the quality of life that can enable men to transcend their circumstances. This is not to say that the actualizer has a completely "I am the master of my fate and the captain of my soul" attitude. It is rather a life style that comes in recognizing and accepting one's varied potentials and making the choice to express those potentials appropriately in the circumstances of the moment.



### Trust

The fourth actualizing characteristic, according to Shostrom, is that of trust. He says: "The actualizer has a deep trust in himself and others to relate to and cope with life in the here and now."<sup>34</sup> While the manipulating personality is basically distrusting of himself and others and resorts to controlling and being controlled, the actualizing personality has greater trust for others and for himself.

Trust that calls forth actualization was evident in one woman's relationship to her teenage daughter. She spoke of their relationship in an actualization session in this manner:

I want her to know that I care about what she's doing yet I know that I can't control her behavior. When it gets to this point I feel that the discipline has to come from within rather than from the outside. I guess I'm trying to say that I have sort of turned her loose. Yet in turning her loose I tried to send with her the message that she was now responsible. I care intensely about what she does with her life. I worry about her sometimes. But I know that she is a strong person and that if she goofs up she'll deal with it and not fold up. It's hardest knowing that she doesn't really confide everything in me even though I've tried not to act like her judge.

This is a most unique response judging from the reaction of others in the group and also from the constant reiteration of numbers of teenagers to the effect that, "My parents don't trust me."

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

The actualizing sense of trust seems to be related to a person's sense of confidence in his own ability and the ability of others to deal with the burdens and temptations of everyday life. Actualizing trust is not related to a simplistic optimistic attitude that everything will turn out for the best. It is related to the belief that one will be able to deal with the future in a creative and fulfilling way. This sense of actualizing trust is seen in the remarks of a man who had just received the reports from the doctor that revealed he had incurable cancer:

I'm really shook up about this. I just didn't know how much I took things for granted. My family, what's going to become of them? I don't want to die at all. In fact that scares me right now just to say it. I'm going to make whatever time I've got left count. You know I wondered how I'd react if the news was bad. I know I'm not going to crumble. I know June and the kids will do all right. Some tough days are ahead but we are going to make it through them. I want to go without whimpering for their sake and for mine.

Another example of actualizing trust is sometimes seen in little children who have not yet learned to become cynical and distrustful in their relationships. Many relationships of childhood are characterized by directness and simplicity that is free of innuendos, hidden agendas, and deceptive unspoken meanings. In an atmosphere of trust there is the possibility of more spontaneous expression of both negative and positive feelings. This, it seems to me, is at least a part of what Jesus was speaking

of when he said, "Unless you become as a little child, you will not enter the kingdom. . . ."

Man's capacity to maintain perspective and a sense of trust in spite of terrible manipulative experiences is dramatized in the life of Nelly Sachs who received the Nobel Prize in literature. She had been persecuted by the Nazis and had been a witness to the houses of death where many persons were systematically annihilated. Addressing the generation to follow her she said:

In spite of all the horrors of the past, I believe in you. . . . Together, full of grief, . . . let us walk together into the future to seek again and again a new beginning--maybe far away, yet ever-present; let us try to find the good dream that wants to be realized in our hearts.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Gertrude C. Schwebell, "Nelly Sachs," The Saturday Review, XXIII (December 10, 1966), 47.

## CHAPTER III

### MANIPULATIVE STYLES OF LIFE

All of us are carefully taught to manipulate. In this chapter the intention is to identify some manipulative patterns that are part of our common culture.

The key is style. All men, consciously and unconsciously, are constantly involved in developing a style of life. The styles discussed in this chapter have had widespread influence in our culture. Looking at a series of life styles and entering into an analysis of their manipulative and actualizing elements is particularly helpful to young persons as they seek to develop their own unique style of life. By style I mean the stance one takes in relation to the total experience of life.

#### THE MIDDLE CLASS AMERICAN STYLE: "THE GOOD LIFE"

A common life style sought out by many American men is the style of "The Good Life." This is a general style and from it a variety of similar styles come. Everyone who seeks "the good life" is not necessarily a blatant manipulator, but there can be significant manipulative patterns which characterize this search.

The "good lifer" is one who is on the achievement treadmill. He is so goal oriented that he fails to live meaningfully in the present. As he pursues his goals, he

can become tomorrow oriented and have a great deal of trouble living in the here and now.

Because of his busyness the "good lifer" often has no time for his family. His weeks are filled with broken promises to his wife and children concerning the experiences that they want to share with him. He is the man who cannot take a vacation and buys any number of things that he never has time to use. He is a doer, a compulsive pusher of himself and everyone around him.

The "good lifer" works even at his play. His dream is the good life, but he discovers little of the reality of it. Often he rationalizes his poor relationships with his family and associates with a sort of martyr feeling, "I'm doing everything I can to see that they have the 'good life.'"

The assumption of the "good lifer," often incorrect, is that others around him share his idea of the "good life." A couple who came for counseling shared their most troubled feelings about their relationship.

Wife: You work hard but you control almost every purchase we make. You never trust me to decide on what we need around the home and I feel just like your child who has to ask every time she wants a nickel for a popsicle.

Husband: But you know that I am just trying to make sure that we have enough to live on later. We have to sacrifice now to be secure in the future. I've been making us toe the line for us. Surely you

know this.

Wife: Just when did we ever make this agreement?  
I'd like to live a little right now.<sup>1</sup>

The "good lifer" is often out of contact with his own inner feelings and personal needs, as well as out of contact with others. His goals often take precedence over his experiencing life in the here and now. Studies of persons whose careers demand a high degree of intellectual competence reveal that these persons as a group are to a high degree out of contact with their own feelings.<sup>2</sup>

Ideas as to that which defines the "good life" vary sharply in our society. To one it is the accumulation of status goods and the conspicuous consumption of approved articles. To another it is the mastery of the discipline of some specialized skill or body of knowledge. For another it is the ability to experience pleasure, yet make no commitment. For another it is giving oneself to a cause.

Whatever the definition of the "good life" the possibility of manipulation is always present if in the search for the "good life" the person denies his innermost feelings, ignores the needs and capabilities of others, and refuses to take responsibility for his environmental and

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<sup>1</sup>Maxie Dunnam, "Counseling Interviews" (San Clemente, California, 1966. Unpublished Manuscripts.)

<sup>2</sup>Sidney Jourard, The Transparent Self (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964), p. 38.

interior conditions.

THE HEMINGWAY STYLE: "YOU ONLY LIVE  
WHEN YOU ARE CLOSE TO DEATH"

This pervasive style of life is a continuing one in Western civilization and from it many other styles grow.

Perhaps the greatest spokesman for this style of life was the writer Ernest Hemingway. His books are full of characters who only reach fulfillment when they are in danger of dying. The most emphatic statement on this style of life can be found in Hemingway's continuing focus on the bull fighter as the man who lives life to the fullest. The moment of truth is the central thesis of this style of life and comes as the matador is poised over the horns of a bull, with sword ready for the kill. This style calls for situations in which one is totally vulnerable.

Hemingway's men seem to seek out the dangerous experience. They place themselves in the jungle and pit their skill and courage against the elements and the beasts. In his book, The Old Man and the Sea, the fisherman chooses to keep his rendezvous with death. The struggle is not really with the fish, it is within the man.

For the followers of this style of life, awareness is discovered in dangerous situations. Only when a person faces death does he reach an awareness of himself and the

deeper meanings of life. Anyone who has had serious surgery, or has faced the meaning of his own mortality in other situations knows that there is a great deal of validity in this assumption.

The manipulation in this style of life is revealed in the artificially contrived situations that some seek out in order to discover if they can make it through their moment of truth. When one picks out a dangerous spot in which to jump in order to discover himself, he has manipulated by controlling the situation. Too often this life close to death style results in role playing rather than a real life involvement.

The source of this style may be found in one of the primary manipulative characteristics: cynicism. The man who must prove himself and who demands that every other man prove himself by defying death is basically distrusting of himself and others. He is not sure if he can measure up to the dangers of life. He is uncertain that he will have the courage and power to cope with the situations of life that come naturally to him. So he seeks out experiences like fighting an animal, or a man, or driving a race car faster than anyone else, or climbing a mountain--experiences that few have had before. Because of a basic cynicism, the person is continually forced to reaffirm self-faith.



## THE HIPPIE STYLE: "MAKE LOVE NOT WAR"

Numbers of young adults have responded to the suggestion of Dr. Timothy Leary, former professor at Harvard, to "tune in, turn on, and drop out." They are adopting a "hip" style of life. This style is in such flux, so varied in expression, that it is impossible to wrap into one tight little package. There are elements, however, that are common to large segments of the hippie subculture.

Unconventional Dress. Their lives seem to the outsider like one continuous costume party. Their goal is to be as highly individualized as possible. In some instances unconventional dress is related to unclean dress. Long hair is part of the style. Unconventional dress is related to reaction to mass society and mass styles.

Unconventional Values. One of the patron saints of the hippie movement is Henry David Thoreau, the recluse of Walden Pond, who rejected his own particular culture and constellation of values. Most hippies are not goal oriented in terms of achieving status or material goods. "Why should I waste my life working?" "What's so good about having a house and a color TV and a big car?" Many hippies are curiously passive and non-violent in contrast to the violent society in which they live.

Unconventional Community. For many of the hippies

the only way to live is by a sort of non-dogmatic communism. The hippie community is a community of share, and share as much alike as possible. Mutual dependence is the rule rather than the exception. The great desire of the individual and the hippie community is to be together.

Unconventional Sex. Sexuality for many hippies is the key part of their quest for freedom. Living together and sleeping around is not the style of all hippies, but enough of them participate to have the highest rate of venereal disease of any subculture in America. In some hippie groups, the sharing of sex is seen as just as important as the sharing of drugs. People have no right to withhold either. Sexual experiences are seen as being characterized by spontaneous gratification, rather than long term commitment and responsibility of the sexual partners for each other.

Unconventional Drugs. The hippie style of life includes unconventional drugs to provide his peak experiences and to bring him to the point of heightened awareness. The hippie has grown up in the midst of a drug centered culture (alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, tranquilizers, pep pills) but these drugs fail to move him. His goal is mind expansion, not mind anesthetizing; he wants to see visions and dream dreams, not see pink elephants and fall into a drunken sleep. So, the hippie takes non-conventional,

non-legal drugs.

Unconventional Protest. The hippie style of life is basically a protest style of life. Since to the hippie any kind of aggression for personal gain is anathema, any kind of competitiveness or combativeness is a threat to the hippie style, and since the hippie is usually a person who has given up on "democratic" methods of change, the hippie protests in unconventional ways.

The hippie style of life is a style that is reaching toward actualization. Manipulation is still present. Hippies are the great users of what they consider incidental. They are participants in a giant throw away of what they consider to be a disposable society.

Although love is the watchword of the hippie, on the part of many it seems to be a rare experience. After many interviews with hippies on the Sunset Strip in Hollywood and Orange County I have concluded that their search is a desperate search for love. An amorphous sort of love in general is proclaimed and practiced in lieu of any one to one continuing relationships which are characterized by caring and commitment. Short term spontaneous happenings, covered over with the word love, may still spell out manipulation in terms of exploitation, sexually and psychologically.

Hippies in many cases seem to be persons who have

extreme problems with love. Self-hate leads some of them to degrade themselves and toss away even their sanity in a desperate attempt to discover meaning. Their manipulation of life with drugs perhaps stems from the lack of any meaningful relationships with persons older than themselves. This lack of meaningful relationships can manifest itself in hostile cynicism.

Passive manipulation is also inherent in the hippie style. Though he "judges" society and "drops out," the hippie remains dependent upon the establishment he has denounced.

#### THE PLAYBOY STYLE: "WINE, WOMEN, AND SONG"

One of the most popular styles of life for young adults is presented in one of the fastest selling monthly magazines on the stand, Playboy. It defines values and a life style for millions of young men. Its pages contain advice on goals and its writers attempt to dictate choices and govern the decisions of its readership.

Playboy presents for its readers each month complete directions on life. The editor, Hugh Hefner, has spelled out over a number of issues his complete philosophy of the "Playboy Life." An outgrowth of this style has been the establishment of Playboy Clubs where members may practice this life style with other devotees of the Playboy philosophy.

This philosophy defines heaven as a place on earth where one has all the right things. To be a part of this life one must achieve and exhibit the approved articles of consumption. The playboy will have the right kind of "pad," the right kind of sport car, wear the right kind of clothes, and be seen in the right kind of places.

Besides the obvious consumption of things, the playboy style includes the conspicuous consumption of persons. The playboy philosophy teaches young men how to relate to women. The center of attraction each month is the "Playmate of the Month," always a beautiful young woman attired scantily or wearing nothing in a photograph fold-out page in the middle of the magazine.

"Playboy Bunnies" are the hostesses in the Playboy Clubs. Their job is to be available to the playboy. The Playboy Bunny is to stimulate the playboy's desires but not to fulfill them. In this style of life looking is permitted, but nothing further, at least on the premises of the Playboy Club. This encourages a form of voyeurism.

One of the central premises of this style of life is that the fulfilled life is the sex-filled life. Handy hints on how to impress and seduce a girl are spelled out in sophisticated ways. One of the ten commandments for young men in this style of life could be seen as "Thou shalt not get married." The moment a man marries he loses his playboy status.

Sexual enjoyment without involvement and responsibility for the sexual partner's life is a chief cornerstone. Some parts of the Playboy philosophy reveal a reaction against restrictions on use of people found in moral codes and teachings of the church.

The manipulations of this style of life at its worst run through the characteristics of deception, control and cynicism. The manipulative playboy spends his time trying to create an impression by buying the prescribed elements of the playboy life style. In some cases he is encouraged to control his relationships by concealing his motives from the young women to whom he relates. His final goal is enjoyment without responsibility. The woman thus becomes a thing to be used, not a person to be appreciated. Like his sports car, his hi-fi, and his pad, a woman becomes an accessory--a possession to enhance his image.

The Playboy philosophy vigorously denies this. It contends that women are grateful to enter into playboy relationships. The emphasis is on mutual sexual enjoyment of playboys and bunnies in a consenting adult relationship. The reality of the situation is that even the playboy has difficulty finding women who want sex without a personal commitment.

The policy of the magazine is to develop the image that young women want to live free of continuing

relationships, and seek out the symbols of the playboy and the playboy himself for their fulfillment. The magazine itself has great difficulty in discovering young women who follow this style of life. I know personally of a young woman who appeared as a "Playmate of the Month." The article, which included a number of pictures of her, stated that she was single, loved to date playboy men, lived in a luxurious pad, and sailed on a yacht. The truth is, this woman was married at the time the pictures were taken, lived in a modest apartment, and had never been on a yacht before the pictures of her were taken. Her primary interest in Playboy was the lucrative fee received for her photograph. The playboy style of life is manipulative in feeling, to the extent that it is body centered rather than person centered. In its manipulative aspects it encourages "it-it" rather than "thou-thou" relationships.

#### THE COSMO STYLE: "ARSENAL OF SEX"

The inversion of the playboy style of life for men is what Dr. Allen Moore has termed the Cosmo girl.<sup>3</sup> The manipulations of the playboy are centered on the goal of eluding marriage and commitment. The manipulations of the Cosmo girl are focused on the opposite goal: marriage.

The Cosmo girl is the life style that is outlined

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<sup>3</sup>Allen Moore, "The Cosmo Girl," Christian Advocate (January 12, 1967).

in Cosmopolitan Magazine. This magazine is now under the direction of Helen Gurley Brown, the author of Sex and The Single Girl. Her book was written around such questions as: "How does a girl go about having an affair?" "How does she clear the decks for action?" "What is the best place for her to consummate the affair?" The writer stated that a big part of the single girl's "arsenal of sex" is her apartment, and her clothes, and the fact that she can give an intimate little dinner.

At first appearance the Cosmo girl resembles the fantasy of Playboy's playmate. She is sexually free, uninhibited, fun loving and, most of all, desirable.

Taking a page out of Playboy's philosophy and turning it around, the Cosmo Girl sees man as an object, an accessory to play with (meaning to manipulate). With luck, she can turn him ultimately into guaranteed security.<sup>4</sup>

Things and sex are the hallmarks of this style of life. For the Cosmo girl, sex is seen as a weapon to manipulate man into giving her what she wants. The weapon of the Playboy male is that he knows all the right places to go, has all of the correct (wish-fulfillment) apparatus, and knows all of the right things to do.

The truth of the matter is, Cosmopolitan has turned the tables on the male magazines and has taken sex as its chief commodity. Sexual references, sexual symbols and sexology are not everything in the magazine, but are certainly the dominant themes of each issue. Features have dealt with impotence of males, ground rules

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 7.



for office affairs, nightwear to make you the only entertainment a man could want after his day's work, a guide to the best male lovers, and hints on how to write love letters.<sup>5</sup>

The result of the Cosmo style of life is to dehumanize and desacralize sex. Both of these styles of life can lead to the deceptive and cynical patterns that make up the characteristics of the manipulator.

The emphasis is placed on the attainment of desirability, not in the sharing of total selfhood.

THE JAMES BOND STYLE: "DAMES, DEATH,  
AND DESTRUCTION"

One pattern of life or "style" that has become international in scope in the past few years is the James Bond style. James Bond is Agent 007, the mythical man of Ian Fleming's fiction.

The image of the James Bond life style hit the culture of America with a hurricane force in the 60's. Millions went to sleep with his rugged, deadly, life lived to the hilt adventures, sending them vicariously into battles with absolutely evil men and sexual relationships with absolutely beautiful women. Over forty-five million copies of the James Bond books have been sold and more than one hundred million persons have attended the James Bond films. This style of life has had wide exposure!

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

The James Bond style is at first glance the style of a modern knight in a fine tailored suit, a personification of competence (James Bond is an expert marksman, mechanic, gourmet, wit, conversationalist, lover) and always on the side of right and justice. His style is seen by some as the style of a modern St. George who sets out to slay the dragons of the 20th century world.

In many of his relationships Bond is the master manipulator. His out is that he is always seeking to manipulate for just causes. Bond lives in a world of objects. He is incapable of lasting relationships because he has discovered that he can trust no one. The hallmark of manipulative relationships is distrust.

In his struggles against manipulation, Bond becomes a manipulator. He out-manipulates the great evil manipulators. His is a solitary life with only episodic encounters with other persons. His style is to live precariously and anonymously. His patterns are summed up in the ballad that precedes the television show "Secret Agent."

There's a man who leads a life of danger,  
To everyone he meets he stays a stranger,  
With every move he makes another chance  
He takes,  
Odds are he won't live to see tomorrow.  
Secret agent man, secret agent man--  
They've given you a number--  
And taken away your name!<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>This is the Theme Song from the English produced television series, Secret Agent.

In relationships with women the Bond style is to remain a stranger. The closeness is all physical closeness. As in the Playboy style, sex is sex without lasting commitment. In Bond's sexual relationships he manipulates and is often manipulated. Evil comes in the form of a voluptuous woman as it did in the person of "Pussy Galore" in the film Goldfinger. Although unalterably opposed in terms of commitment to values and institutions, James Bond and "Pussy Galore" have no problem entering into the most intimate relationship of all: sexual intercourse.

The Bond style uses persons as though they were things. Love is never seen as part of his style. Integrity for the Bond style is limited to destruction of the enemy. Efficiency in destroying the enemy is the first virtue. His only prized possession is a favorite weapon. He uses his body as a tool, "armed" with judo and karate.

Mechanical manipulation also plays a role. Nothing is spared to equip Bond with all of the latest gadgets of manipulation and destruction; so we find him using super-sensitive "bugging" devices, cars with smoke screen capability, machine guns under the headlights, and ejection seats for the elimination of an enemy.

"To everyone he meets he stays a stranger." That is the key to the danger in the Bond style. He never loves and is never loved. No one loves him! Women desire him, give themselves to him, but never really love him.

No one knows Bond. He is presented as the AWARE man, (a characteristic of actualization). But Bond's awareness is not actualizing. Aware of the soft spots of the human species, his world is the world of manipulative cynicism. His self can never be known. He must spend his days bravely defying death, destruction, and dames, by pitting himself against the mad enemies who abound. No one can be trusted.

To be truly human and actualizing is to love and be loved. Actualizers enter into long-term relationships. Bond has none. In Fleming's first novel, Casino Royale, Bond is told by his boss not to become human.

Now that you have seen a truly evil man you will know how evil they can be, and you will go after them to destroy them in order to protect yourself and the people you love. You won't wait or argue about it. You know what they look like now and what they can do to people. You may be a bit more choosy about the jobs you take on. You may want to be certain that the target is really black. . . . Surround yourself with human beings, my dear James. They are easier to fight for than principles. . . . But don't let me down and become human yourself. We would lose such a wonderful machine.<sup>7</sup>

Since the Bond style of life succeeds in being more machine-like than human-like, it must be rejected as characteristically manipulative.

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<sup>7</sup>Ian Fleming, Casino Royale (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953), p. 112.

## THE DRUG STYLE: "TUNE IN, TURN ON, DROP OUT"

A style of life that is gaining popularity in our time includes taking so-called "mind expanding" drugs. The most widespread drug is lysurgic acid, better known as L.S.D. While this style originally attracted principally teenagers and young adults, it has spread into other groups.

The stated goal of this style of life is the attainment of one of the prime characteristics of actualization: awareness. The takers of L.S.D. and like drugs claim to be involved in a process of fully looking at themselves and others. The L.S.D. user makes life experience-centered. The terminology of this style includes "taking a trip," "flying," and "tuning in."

Like many other religious styles the L.S.D. style claimed absolute results for those who will join the ranks. This style promises that the drugs, as the sacramental means of grace, will enable the taker to understand himself in a new way and lead him into a deeper awareness of what life is all about.<sup>8</sup>

The followers of this drug-centered style of life become very evangelistic and fervent in their attempt to make converts. Witness some of the statements of one of

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<sup>8</sup>Free Press (Los Angeles, California, June, 1967).

the leaders, Dr. Timothy Leary, psychologist and former instructor at Harvard: "We are starting a new religious revival: We are calling people 'to tune in, turn on, and drop out.' We intend to put psychiatry out of business."<sup>9</sup> A "Group L.S.D." pamphlet advertised the drug experience as "a safe and successful program for the solving of human problems and the transformation of life," and told of five hundred outcasts of society, "the rejected fringe of humanity," whose lives were transformed.

The object of this style is to produce psychedelic celebrations. "We are going to turn on America, then Europe, then Asia." Attempts are made to heighten the awareness of persons participating in the drug experience through the use of art and more traditional religious resources.

The use of drugs to produce actualization may be a valid resource in the future. At this time the overwhelming majority of scientists and trained observers of personality patterns reject the unregulated use of drugs as being dangerous. In many cases the taking of L.S.D. and other like drugs is certainly manipulative and harmful, rather than providing the desired results of actualization.

The manipulative characteristic most likely pronounced in the L.S.D. takers is unawareness. Studies of

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<sup>9</sup>Timothy Leary, quoted in the Los Angeles Times (August 10, 1968).

large numbers of persons who have come into the hospitals for treatment reveal a feeling of deadness and boredom in many who have chosen this style of life. "That beautiful young woman sitting in the corner," a doctor in Los Angeles County Hospital said to this writer, "believes that she is an orange. She has been non-communicative for days. She will not respond to any human contact." The drug style of life is one way of reaching detachment from the struggles of the world. In many ways it parallels the thinking of some Eastern cults in the sense of hopelessness about life.

#### THE SUPREMIST STYLE: "OURS IS THE TRUE WAY"

The Supremist Style of life is characterized by an absolute belief in the rightness of one's views or the purposes of one's institution or system. Only absolute loyalty and obedience will do for the supremacist. In this style no criticism or departure from the status quo is permitted. Any deviation from the stated order of the pronounced articles of faith is seen by the supremacist as being traitorous.

The supremacist is often a person who uses all the tactics of manipulation to save himself and others from manipulation that is real or imagined. In this instance the supremacist fits most closely the role of the Protector in the theory of Man the Manipulator. The person who practices this style claims that he does what he does

because he doesn't want to see people get hurt.

The supremacist is often found claiming that he is the holder of the absolute truth in such areas of life as religion, race, and politics. The supremacist exaggerates his "top-dog" potentials, that is, his strength, because he is basically insecure and incomplete. Thus he also may be described as a Dictator Manipulator type. He cannot generate self-assurance out of his rejected self, so finds it only by clinging blindly to whatever support he happens to embrace. This passionate attachment is felt to be the source of all virtue and strength. Even though his fanatical dedication is seen by him as loyal and devoted support to a holy cause, it is in reality a frantic effort to prove his worth.

This style is dependent on a devil theory of history. The supremacist always needs a well defined enemy to do battle with. The enemy can be, "the mongrelizers of the races," "the comsymps," "the left wingers," "the apostates," "the heretics," or any number of other "devil" characters. Someone or something that is threatening his "way of life" is necessary, even if it must be created. The supremacist often claims that he is the true patriot, and the only one who is really loyal. He boasts powers of prophecy and inside information on what will take place in the near future. His attitude is that of a misunderstood martyr: "No one else is paying any attention to this



great danger and evil, but I will be loyal."

One main focus of this style is the method of manipulating by projecting. The supremacist manipulator transfers his feelings onto other persons and groups or even mythical situations. T. W. Adorno in his famous work, The Authoritarian Personality, describes how the German people, unable to accept their own sexual and acquisitive desires, projected them onto the Jews and then punished the group on which they had projected them.<sup>10</sup> The supremacist pushes his unwanted feelings off onto others. This attitude is related to the collective myth of many white persons concerning Negroes. The Negro race in America has become the great dumping ground for the unacceptable and unresolved sexual and economic feelings and relationships of the whites. John Dollard also maintains that the popular images of the Negro as lazy, virile and sexually promiscuous are at base the projected unacceptable feelings of the whites.<sup>11</sup>

Wherever supremacy manipulation is widespread the continuous projected images produce the self-fulfilling prophecy. The manipulated persons can get no other identity images than the images given to them by the power

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<sup>10</sup>T. W. Adorno, The Authoritarian Personality (New York: Harper and Row, 1951).

<sup>11</sup>John Dollard, Caste and Class in a Southern Town (New York: Doubleday, 1957).

structure in a controlled society. Members of minorities have become aware of this and are trying to remedy the situation by working for a more balanced interpretation of history in text books.

The supremacist works to deaden awareness and to keep his victims in a child-like state of dependence. The policy of the Belgian government in relationship to their colony of the Congo is a case in point. For many years the Belgian policy was to give the citizens of the Congo only a minimum level of education because "they were not ready." When independence was finally granted, because of immense internal and external pressure in 1960, there were only six Congolese college graduates out of 16,000,000 persons!

Harvey Cox points out the place of the supremacist manipulator: "Cultures concentrate repressed feelings into roles which are forced on given individuals who in turn enact them."<sup>12</sup> This type of role-expectation-manipulation by supremacists can be seen in the life style of persons in the Salem witch trials and in the "brainwashing" of American soldiers in the Korean War.

The supremacist manipulator is cynical, believing that others are always trying to manipulate his life and that

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<sup>12</sup>Harvey Cox, The Secular City (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965), p. 44.

the only answer is to out-manipulate the manipulators. The supremacist is found in many categories: Racist, Fanatic Nationalist, Super Patriot, Bigoted Religionist. The supremacist misses the richness of polarities and lacks awareness of his power, and the power of others to actualize.

THE BLACK MUSLIM STYLE: "RADICAL  
REACTION TO OPPRESSION"

One rising style of life in America is found in Negro culture. This is the life style of the Black Muslim. This style of life is a complete way of existence for numbers of persons.

The Black Muslim style is religious and cultural at base. It affords its adherents a sense of pride and belonging. This style is based on a reaction to the years of slavery, discrimination, and degradation the black man in America has faced, a disillusionment with the "Christian" style of life, and total despair of the Negro ever achieving the "American" way of life.

Among the tenets of this style of life is the belief that the Negro Race is superior to the white race and that all white people are "devils." The statement of one of the leaders of this style, Malcolm X, upon hearing of an airplane crash in which 129 southern white persons lost their lives was, "That's good, God willed it that way. He's punishing all the white devils for the way they have treated

the black man."<sup>13</sup>

The followers of this style of life are highly jealous and evangelical. They seek converts with a radical determination. Those seeking to follow this style of life are asked to give up drinking and smoking. There is also a strict code regarding dress, especially for women. The absolute leader of the Black Muslim movement, Elijah Muhammed, is considered a prophet by his followers, and rules in autocratic fashion.

Among the things that followers of this style of life are not requested to give up is the use of weapons. This style is definitely not non-violent, and many of the members of the movement become part of an elite fighting and protective society called the Fruit of Islam.

Like the white segregationist, this style seeks separation of the races, and wishes to set up a society of its own. Integration between the races is frowned upon.

#### THE STYLE OF THE DISADVANTAGED: "BLACK POWER"

Closely related to the Black Muslim style of life is the Black Power style. The most articulate spokesman and model for this style has been Stokeley Carmichael, the former head of SNCC (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee).

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<sup>13</sup>"Black Power Leader Speaks Out," Los Angeles Times (May 22, 1964).

This style of life is based on the assumption that the Black Man must achieve political and economic power before he can have equality. This style of life looks upon all whites, and the entire system of social and political apparatus of the United States as corrupt and unjust.

The followers of the Black Power style mean to have power for black people. This style, like the style of the Black Muslim, stems from long unmet, justifiable aspirations for freedom and dignity. It is a reaction to the manipulation used during slavery and later by discriminating white America.

Some elements of the followers of the Black Power style would unite people along the lines of race to develop a block of power that will make a difference in government. This style of life is committed to restructuring the entire political and social system of the country. It is a style of life that determines both identity and goals for its adherents. Like any essentially religious style it demands obedience and sacrifice on the part of its followers.

Both the Black Muslim and some Black Power style advocates assume many manipulative characteristics. These styles attempt to turn the manipulative tables, seeking to have the rules reversed. Inasmuch as the Negro has been underdog for so long, these styles promise him the possibility of becoming top-dog and lording it over the white man who has been the top-dog for too long.

The manipulative devices of criticalness, aggression, dictator strength, and calculating control, are emphasized out of proportion, to achieve the goals of mastery and separateness.

Such styles do provide a missing ingredient in many lives; identity, purpose and hope. They have been developed out of hopelessness and a wretched despair over other styles that seem to be shattered and broken for large numbers of persons.

The belief that America is the land of the free, a place where any man may rise up if he works hard enough and where each man is given the same rights, and justice, is a cruel fantasy to many persons. Experience says "no" to this belief in the lives of millions.<sup>14</sup> They know what it is to be divested of their freedom and dignity by both persons in control and by an impersonal system. They know the hell of manipulation. It is no wonder they wish to exchange their role of the manipulated for the role of the manipulator. But changing places will not produce actualization.

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<sup>14</sup>United States National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Dutton, 1968).

## CHAPTER IV

### MANIPULATION IN THE CHURCH

If a man is a composite of opposites, a congregation is an organization of opposites. Take everything that is true about individual man and multiply it many times and you have the congregation in all of its complexity. Since manipulation has become the modus operandi of our culture, the church has not escaped being taken in by this style of life.

### MANIPULATION IN THE CONGREGATION

Many sensitive ministers and laymen are aware of the retreat to manipulation as a modus operandi of some local congregations. Congregational members sometimes manipulate each other. They manipulate the minister and he manipulates them. The whole church, the program, mission, and life can be caught in manipulative relationships.

The following discussion lists the practical ways that a congregation may use in manipulation. The case is presented in the extreme to dramatize ways in which manipulation takes place in the church.

#### Cancel the Pledge

Perhaps the most glaring manipulation is attempted

through the financial structure of the church. Many otherwise thoughtful and sensitive laymen readily seek to control the ministry and mission of the church through the gifts they make.

During the tense days following the passage of the school desegregation law in 1954, some churches in the south faced such cancellations as they moved more boldly into involvement in race relations. In several areas lay groups were organized in opposition to the church's involvement in such controversial matters. Organizations like the Mississippi Association of Methodist Ministers and Laymen fostered the idea that those who were opposed to such church involvement in public issues should withhold all contributions. Young ministers who signed a "Born of Conviction" statement opposing racial discrimination in Mississippi were told by the Church hierarchy that they "cost" the Church \$150,000.00 in gifts to "benevolences."<sup>1</sup> Newspaper accounts indicated that when Bishop Pike of the Episcopal Diocese of California took his stand on Proposition 14 in 1964, large financial pledges of wealthy laymen across the state were cancelled.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Maxie Dunnam, Interviews with Methodist ministers who left the State of Mississippi under pressure over the racial issue (San Clemente, 1966).

<sup>2</sup>Los Angeles Times (December 12, 1964).



### Cut Off Attendance

Another tactic that chokes the local congregation is a passive manipulative device: withdrawal from participation. Many people seek to manipulate the direction of a local congregation by their presence or absence. If the direction is to their liking they indicate it by their presence in the activities and worship of the Church; if not to their liking, by their absence. In a follow-up of persons who had withdrawn from congregations who had moved toward community action involvement the number one reason for leaving the Church was: "I do not come to Church to hear about or get involved in controversy."

### Coerce Through Committees

In many local congregations, according to the organizational structure, the minister and the entire congregation can be coerced through committees. Racists in southern churches were urged to attend Quarterly Conferences of local Methodist Churches to which they belonged and nominate from the floor people of like-mindedness for particular positions in the Church where power could be exerted. A key illustration of coercion through committee is the blocking of the purchase of a home for a black Methodist District Superintendent in an exclusive all white neighborhood. A lawyer volunteered to help with the purchase of a home and kept the down payment until the

home was sold to another party.

### Create Dissension

In all of life, and certainly in the Church, people have learned that the creation of dissension among participants is a primary way of control. When there is enough dissension to be disruptive and divisive ministers can be "moved," programs can be altered, emphasis can be shifted--the manipulator can move in to "calm the troubled waters" and settle the waves so that the tide might flow in the direction of his desires. He becomes the "protector" of the institution. The primary weapon of this technique is gossip. A word with multiple meaning is dropped here, an innuendo there, until an entire congregation (especially if it is a small one) is buzzing. It isn't unusual for the buzzing to become an uproar and the manipulative "protector" can then do his work.

### Cover Up With Cliches

In no place is the cliché more common than in the Church. "I'd like to get back to good old-fashioned religion." "Preacher, why don't you just preach the Bible!" "Politics and religion just don't mix." "We've never done it this way before"--and on and on ad infinitum. The use of these to confuse the issue and manipulate is common. Many vital considerations are never faced in congregations because they get lost in the cloudland of

cliches.

### Control the Curriculum

The favorite technique of many within the Church is the "control-the-curriculum game." Often the primary instrument used in this game is the Bible. "Just as long as we stick to the Bible in our studies." This is a difficult argument to deal with. The effort here is deliberate and specific. No contemporary or controversial issues are faced. No contrary views are considered. Children, youth, and adults are to be fed a pre-digested Pabulum and are never to be given the opportunity to wrestle with issues or to have the freedom to make personal decisions.

### Close the Mind

Closing the mind is a passive manipulative technique used by many in the congregation. They simply will not listen. Harry S. Sullivan says, "that one tends to become 'selectively inattentive' to anything which threatens his sense of security."<sup>3</sup> Many use this as a habitual pattern of behavior in order to cut off any idea that will threaten pre-conceived notions and pre-arranged prejudices. A minister may preach for years on the Christian principle

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<sup>3</sup>Harry S. Sullivan, The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry (New York: Norton, 1953), p. 43.

of brotherhood and nothing happens. Then he gets specifically involved in action that seeks to build brotherhood and the fury of the congregation is brought down upon him. He may have been saying all the things he is now acting out, but people refused to hear or failed to understand. They closed their minds and became "selectively inattentive." "I had been consistently preaching on racial harmony and brotherhood for six years," said one minister I interviewed. "Nothing really happened until I marched in a demonstration. Then the crisis really came. It was all right to talk, but not to act."

### Manipulating the Minister

In how many ways does a congregation manipulate a minister! The congregation can both idolize and tantalize. They make of him an image of purity and perfection and dare him to mar that image. They seduce him through gratuities such as country club memberships and "ministerial discounts." Though gifts are given "with no strings attached," people consciously and unconsciously get him in their debt.

In subtle ways people work to control the public opinions and proclamations expressed by the minister. When contrary opinion or action is expressed there is the unspoken "How can you do this to us?" and the "After all that we have done for you, and now you embarrass us by

your unpopular stand."

Both wife and children of a minister need desperately the social relations found in the community. These relationships are often controlled by the community in order to control the minister. And the minister often falls into the snare. To protect his "image" he resorts to the manipulation of his family. By different techniques, conscious and unconscious, he coerces his family to conform. "What will the community think?" is a common question in a parsonage family. Those dearest to the minister are often forced to conclude that they are extensions of his pastoral prestige and ministerial ego.

Often a minister is manipulated into a pattern of "professional friend." Almost from the outset this style is forced upon him; he becomes the "hail fellow, well met." William E. Hulme reminds us that in the science fiction spoof of the future, The Big Ball of Wax, the leading ecclesiastical denomination is called "Your Church." Instead of being titled "Reverend" or "Father," the clergy of "Your Church" are addressed as "Friendly." The founder of "Your Church" is the "Right Friendly Harry Wilkes Murray," who, as one might suspect, had previously been a top merchandising man. By being excessively friendly and an accomplished promoter success in the Church is

guaranteed.<sup>4</sup>

Here is a two-way manipulation. The minister is manipulated into this position and finds that it works so well that he often deliberately follows the pattern and seeks to perfect it. In a market-place culture this image is effective for the influence and control of people.

### THE MANIPULATING MINISTER

A manipulator may be defined as a person who maneuvers, uses, and/or controls himself and others as things or objects. He may be dressed in a clerical collar. He can use his ministerial office as an instrument of manipulation. The position he holds in the community, the way he comes to that position, and the leadership he exercises over a particular congregation places him in a unique position for manipulation.

Ministers are commonly seen as authority figures. Whether this is in keeping with the minister's desires or not doesn't matter. The very nature of his office sets him apart in this way. This image sets the stage for all the manipulative processes to spring into action. It is easy for him to play the top-dog: the "bully," the "judge," the "dictator," or the "calculator." Likewise,

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<sup>4</sup>William E. Hulme, Your Pastor's Problems: A Guide for Ministers and Laymen (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1966), pp. 41-2.

he can play the under-dog: the "nice-guy," the "clinging vine," the "weakling," or the "protector." Consciously or unconsciously he plays the game that has been prescribed for him.

Even when the minister is not manipulative, people may feel manipulated because of his image of authority. An actualizing minister is aware of this false image that has been perpetuated, and by his life style seeks to destroy it by open and democratic relationships. In the minister's presence people commonly act differently. He goes into the barber shop and the language changes. The "smutty" stories are broken off and a restrictive pall falls over the conversation.

The fact that many view the minister as a hired "professional Christian" doesn't help the problem. A double standard is set and ministers are restricted in ways that are not applied to laymen. The rules against smoking and drinking for ministers set by some denominations, but not applied to laymen, illustrates this. It is as though the minister is paid by the laymen to abstain from certain vices that they themselves will not forego.

### The Power of His Profession

The manipulative minister feels that there are two types of Christians. There are the full-time Christians and the part-time Christians. As a full-time Christian

(professional) he "pulls rank" and expresses superiority by reference to the uniqueness of his call.

The active and the passive manipulator emerge here. The active manipulator continually reminds his congregation of the power of his profession and the authority that is vested in him as one "called by God." He seeks either directly or indirectly to create an aura of holiness around the ministerial office. His final authority is not in his person but in his profession. When in conflict on an issue he resorts to proclaiming himself "on the Lord's side." And who will question the word of God!

The passive manipulator who uses his profession as a manipulative device plays the role of the "humble servant of God" who takes his orders from above and is sorry that this is in conflict with opinions and ideas of others. He emphasizes his position as an under-dog and sometimes martyr, in the community, and thus he tries to manipulate people into following.

### The Weight of His Authority

When leading worship, preaching, administering the sacraments, officiating at services such as weddings and funerals, ministers are often seen as vehicles of God's grace. It is so easy to manipulate by performing in a sharing or withholding way.

Often a minister will control his people by letting



them know he feels that they are unworthy of grace. Too often their unworthiness is because of opposition to him. The sick minister even ties all of his people's opposition to him and his policies, to opposition to God!

The result of this "weight of authority" manipulation is that the minister uses "the cloth" to cover his nakedness.

Since his identity as a person as well as a minister is tied up with the particular tangible credential, he espouses it with such authoritarian rigidity that he discourages any questioning either from within himself or from his people. The show must go on--this holy masquerade, as Glove Hartmann calls it. The laymen's expectations that demand too much of the minister constrain the insecure minister to demand too little of the layman. They need simply believe what he tells them. He leads them into the same fraudulent security into which the pressure to justify his authority has driven him.<sup>5</sup>

### The Degree of His Training

Another technique of the manipulator can be in reference to his training. Though he would never admit it, he "plays omniscient." He fires his college degrees and seminary training back at anyone who dares take potshots at his authority. Impression rather than expression can characterize his efforts.

He can try to overwhelm people by boasting of the number of years spent in preparation for his task. He drops the names of his professors here and there as he

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 100-101.

preaches or leads discussion groups. Instead of talking with people he talks down to them. If people do not respond to his preaching he takes refuge in academics.

This kind of manipulator practices "milk bottle" preaching. He sees the congregation as being like empty milk bottles. His task is to flip open the caps of the bottles, pour in the milk that he has for the day, and send them on their way. The manipulating minister's life style is monological with little thought of dialogue and little concern with hearing needs!

#### The Power of His Privilege

All ministers know things about individuals and families that others do not know. In his position he has access to "classified" information.

The kind of information readily available to the minister tempts the minister to manipulate. The opportunity is great for the manipulator to use the information by playing on guilt or by cleverly demanding that the person act or participate in ways pleasing to him.

In a counseling situation a minister may receive information from one person which involves a number of others. Though this is confidential information, the manipulator could use it to influence and control participation and cooperation. This is sometimes done in playing on guilt for gifts for the Church.

### The Stacking of the Deck

"Control" is the key word for the manipulator. The manipulative minister can seldom trust the democratic process. He feels a need to stack the deck to control all the groups and committees in the Church.

A manipulator does not believe that truth in the congregation can be arrived at by a process of checks and balances. He can dominate by putting weak-egoed persons into places of leadership rather than risking the choosing of strong personalities.<sup>6</sup>

The manipulative minister will seek to prevent himself from ever getting in the position of being outvoted. An illustration of this came from a large congregation which denominational leaders felt to be in desperate need of moving from the downtown heart of the city. More space was needed for building and parking. The building was run-down and in obvious need of repair. To repair and get it into half-way serviceable condition would require a substantial sum of money. It was the feeling of the denominational leaders, the minister, and a large number of the congregation officials, that the move was necessary and inevitable. An official conference was set for a decision.

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<sup>6</sup>Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., in a lecture at the School of Theology, Claremont, California, in March, 1963. Dr. Clinebell outlined this style of ministry as being at times conscious and deliberate and at times an unconscious reaction to the fear of being overwhelmed by strong personalities.

Two days before the meeting, the minister, because of direct verbal opposition from a few people whom he thought represented a larger number, began to feel that the vote would not favor a move. Finding no legitimate or technical reason for calling off the meeting, he faked an illness and persuaded the denominational leader to postpone the conference for another month. The issue would have passed, but the manipulator was not secure enough in his position to risk a vote.

Much of the time of the manipulator in clerics is spent in "stacking the deck," rounding up the necessary votes, and organizing the congregation around those over whom he has complete control. He is most comfortable in a Church made up of "little old ladies of both sexes."

He sees persons as pawns that he is to move about on the board of the Church programs, accomplishing his ends by directing all the activity, all the ideas, all the decisions, all of the time. The relationship between him and persons is necessarily an "I-it" and not an "I-Thou" relationship. People are reduced to things. The minister who constantly attempts to stack the deck is unaware of the validity of the "Player-Coach Role."

### The Scarcity of His Kind

An effective lever in the manipulative minister's effort at power and control is "the scarcity of his kind." Everyone now knows there is a shortage of ministers--

especially ministers!

In the United Methodist Church alone over 1200 new ministers are needed each year to fill the vacancies created by deaths and retirements. This is not to mention the countless expanding areas of ministry in which the Church is constantly seeking to involve herself. With these valid facts in mind, the "sharp" manipulator has one good way of getting his way. He lets the people know that they are short on alternatives.

A word is dropped about the pulpit committee that was in town last week talking to him. Or, the less subtle, "Did you notice that strange group of people in Church last Sunday? They were from St. John's Church. You know their minister just resigned." The congregation is made aware of the opportunities that are knocking at his door. Thus they are stimulated to less opposition and more benefits for their "much sought-after minister."

#### MOVING TOWARD ACTUALIZATION

In the last three chapters I suggest specific ways in which individuals grow from manipulation toward actualization. I want now to state briefly some principles that apply in moving the Church toward actualization. Nowhere do I suggest that a person or a congregation can become actualized in the fullest sense of the word. I do want to suggest the alternative of actualization as a style of

life which will enable churchmen to function more fully as persons and be the individuals they were created to be.

### The Priority of Persons

Erich Fromm has said that, "things can be dissected or manipulated without damage to their nature, but man is not a thing."<sup>7</sup> Man cannot be dissected without being destroyed. He cannot be manipulated without being harmed. When the truth of this really burns itself into the life of the Church--ministers and laymen alike--a major step will have been taken in the move from manipulation to actualization. Persons have priority over programs. When this is not the case, the ministry of the Church is reduced to the level of the market place.

The Church, then, should be the place where the primary characteristics of actualization can be expressed, accepted, appreciated, and cultivated: I have demonstrated by interviews that the opposite is too often true. A person must be able to express himself and his feelings honestly. In the Christian Community a person should, in fact, be able to be his feelings in a genuine fashion without fear of condemnation. The morning after a layman had expressed himself honestly in a meeting the evening before, he confronted his minister with the question,

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<sup>7</sup>Erich Fromm, "Man Is Not a Thing," The Saturday Review, XXIV (March 16, 1967).

"Have I been excommunicated?" His assumption was that because he had expressed himself he had disrupted the "program." Consciously or unconsciously his experience in the Church had taught him that programs running smoothly without controversy are more important than persons. The actualizing response of the minister was, "The expression of your real feelings was a courageous thing. Thank you for being yourself. I appreciate it." When actualizing leadership is practiced persons have priority over programs.

#### Appreciation of Differences

Too often in authoritarian type churches efforts are made to squeeze persons into a mold, and any expression of differences is scorned--at least, frowned upon. Here dogma can take precedence over persons. Content of belief is of vital importance. However, statements of faith and dogma are not scientifically verifiable. There should be room for honest variance on questions of faith and morals even within the same Church or same family.

In the Church the individual's capacity of awareness should be enhanced, especially at the inter-personal and ultra-personal levels. Here the person should be stimulated to grow and share. This can be so only in an atmosphere of freedom and trust. Until the Church can provide this setting it will be depressing rather than an exciting fellowship.

### Ministry-Laity Relationships

One of the primary causes for manipulation in the Church is false role expectation. In this professionalism takes precedence over persons.

While the minister is a professional, he must never allow himself or his laymen to believe that he is a "super" Christian. He is an equal among equals. While his professional role puts him in a leadership position, and even in a position of power out of proportion to the power of others, it does not convey upon him special value or worth. His professional status should never make for a top-dog under-dog relationship. The actualizing minister continually resists the pressures to be made a top-dog, and must always resist the subtle economic pressures that would sometimes make him an under-dog.

Samuel Blizzard says that the believer-saint is traditionally a normative role for the minister. "The believer-saint is an example for others to follow because he is dependent upon God. He conceives himself primarily as a 'man of faith' who humbly seeks God's will."<sup>8</sup> Not only does the minister sometimes conceive himself in this fashion; it is not uncommon for the layman to demand that he play this role. The actualizing minister and layman steadfastly resists this dichotomy. The minister is seen

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<sup>8</sup>Wayne E. Oates (ed.), The Minister's Own Mental Health (Manhasset, N. Y.: Channel Press, 1961), p. 147.



as a "player-coach." But he is still a player! A shared ministry is the aim of the actualizing Church. Therefore, the minister is a struggler among strugglers, a believer among believers, a seeker among seekers, a servant among servants, and a sinner among sinners.

The passive participant is often the professional role expectation of the layman. Yet in the actualizing relationship the ancient concept of the laos, the whole people of God, the priesthood of all believers, is sought. Ministers and laymen worship together, work together, study together, serve together, and grow together.

The actualizing relationship of minister and layman is characterized by shared risk-taking. Both dare to resist the false role expectations and be themselves in honesty and openness. This is the heart of the actualizing relationship. Such daring involves the constant possibility of failure and disappointment, but also promises fulfillment that comes from real communion and that results from shared accomplishments.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CHRISTIAN ACTUALIZING STYLE OF LIFE

In chapter two the discussion centered on the general characteristics of all actualizing styles as honesty, awareness, freedom, and trust. This chapter will propose that there is a specifically Christian actualizing style of life. Jesus is the indicator of the primary way. His life is the unique witness to the fact that we do not have to live as manipulators. He shatters the chains of enslavement, setting us free to become the persons God intended us to be. "Christian existence is spiritual existence that exercises its new freedom in love. Christian existence cannot flourish apart from belief in and worship of God as he is known in Jesus."<sup>1</sup>

### JESUS AS AN ACTUALIZOR

Jesus brought together the theory and practice of religion. "It was said of men of old--thou shalt not--but I say to you . . ." Through the words he spoke, the people he encountered, and the decisive actions he took, Jesus' life fulfilled a specific style of actualization. Maslow defined the characteristics of a self-actualizing person

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<sup>1</sup>John B. Cobb, Jr., The Structure of Christian Existence (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), p. 123.

as a composite of all the subjects he had studied.<sup>2</sup> None of his subjects possessed them all. It is my belief that Jesus, on the other hand, not only proposed the characteristics of the Christian actualizer, but brought them together in a unique style of life. Jesus' style of life, as well as his teachings, grew out of his unique awareness of the immediacy of God.

The keynote in the "ethical" teaching of Jesus, then, is that of response to the reality of God. Since all the teaching is set in the context of the proclamation of the Kingdom, it follows that the ethical teaching is not to be considered, and indeed could not exist, apart from the challenge to recognize God eschatologically at work in the experience of men.<sup>3</sup>

The Beatitudes of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount are a significant expression of the Christian actualizing style which was incarnate in him.

New Testament research on the Beatitudes suggests that they proclaim both a present and a future blessing. The Beatitudes confer a blessing upon those who are in right relationship to God's Kingdom and to the one who represents the present reality of the Kingdom: Jesus. "'Blessed' is always applied elsewhere in Matthew to those who obey Jesus. The 'Kingdom of Heaven' is promised only

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<sup>2</sup>Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1962).

<sup>3</sup>Norman Perrin, Rediscovering the Teachings of Jesus (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 151.

to those who obey Jesus."<sup>4</sup>

The message communicated in the Beatitudes is that existence in the presence is eschatologically conditioned. The present blessing which the disciple of Jesus may know is always related to the future mighty acts of God and the reign of his Kingdom. While Jesus does point to a time in the future when God will rule, his self understanding, as interpreted by the church, was that this rule had already begun to take place in his life and ministry.

It was such an understanding of existence that Jesus offered to men. It was such an understanding that makes his eschatology relevant. It was such an understanding of existence by which Jesus lived, by which his own selfhood was actualized and his person constituted.<sup>5</sup>

The Beatitudes are expressions of an actualizing pattern of life having within them the actualizing characteristics of freedom, trust, honesty, and awareness. Related to the total message of Jesus, they say that when we are alive to God and his Kingdom we receive the "blessing" of being fully alive in the present and can be pulled to growth in our knowledge of God's final salvation in the future. The Beatitudes speak in a paradoxical way and reverse many priorities by which men live.

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<sup>4</sup>Irwin W. Batdorf, Interpreting the Beatitudes (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), p. 11.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 129.

God forgives the tax collectors and the prostitutes, he breaks the security of the wealthy. . . . Within poverty is God's reign, within hunger fullness, among tears joy, whereas the full starve, and laughter becomes weeping and wailing. The self-saving life closes itself, while he who opens himself without reserve, even to the extent of death lives all the while from God. Those who puff themselves up are brought down hard, but the lowly are borne by God. . . . In this eschatological occurrence, taking place in Jesus' present, his existence is constituted. This existence finds expression in various ways, but within the variety of expression there is a consistent interpretation of existence.<sup>6</sup>

While I do not believe that the Beatitudes are necessarily direct quotations from Jesus, I do believe that his interpretation of God's relationship to and plan for man's life can be discovered in part by an analysis of the Beatitudes.

#### JESUS AS A MODEL

In his book, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, Carl Jung reminds us that:

It is only when a person exists according to the mode that is appropriate to him that he is responsible and capable of healthy activity; without this he is only the pale follower, a being who dogs the footsteps of others and is deprived of his own personality.<sup>7</sup>

This word must be remembered by those seeking the Christian actualizing style. We have our own elan, our own

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<sup>6</sup>James M. Robinson, "The Formal Structure of Jesus' Message," Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation, ed. by William Klassen and Graydon F. Snyder (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962), p. 104.

<sup>7</sup>Carl G. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1933), p. 33.

individual freedom of expression. Unlike Hemingway, or Bond, or Playboy, the Christian actualizing style does not call for image imitation which centers on superficial accoutrements or conformity. There may be "manners" which can be acquired by the Christian, or a code of conduct by which he lives, but this is not the manner nor is it the style. Though there are multitudes of witnesses to the Christian actualizing style--Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Dag Hamarskjold, Evelyn Underhill, Florence Allshorn, etc.--we are not to seek to copy them. We do find in them vital attempts to speak to us. The unique image, however, is Jesus Christ, and our uniqueness is found in seeking identification with this model.

The uniqueness of Christian actualization in relation to other forms of actualization is that in Jesus God reveals what it means to be a man, and through his spirit calls forth our own unique personal expression of Christian actualization potentials. Through faith in him we can be made aware of the many facets of our uniqueness, and are called to fulfill them. He thus makes it possible for each of us to be a man after his likeness, through developing the unique personality which is ours. This is what Paul is talking about when he speaks of being "conformed to the image of Christ" (Rom. 8:29), or having Christ "formed in you" (Gal. 4:19). For the person who would seek the Christian actualizing style, Jesus reveals the true nature

of man, and offers us the opportunity to share in the "sonship of God." In this sense Jesus is "the Way."

The real uniqueness of the Christian style, therefore, is not a new set of characteristics of actualization other than honesty, awareness, freedom, and trust, but the way these are combined and integrated in the life of Jesus to provide the model of the kind of men we are to be. What really matters in a Christian actualizing style is being--an inner faith, an inner conviction, an inner belief in one's self and a commitment to the ultimate in life.

Life on earth is life in the making. Through the continuous making of resolute decisions man patterns his life and molds his character. This is what Erich Fromm was talking about when he wrote:

Decisions are not made on some final day but early in one's development. Life is a process of degrees in freedom. Most people fail not because they are bad, they fail because they do not wake up to see that sometime at a fork in the road they have to decide. They are not aware when life asks them a question and they still have an alternative answer.<sup>8</sup>

Basic to this life of choice for the actualizing Christian is his ultimate commitment to life as he finds it revealed in Jesus.

He knew God as the presently active reality that had incomparably greater reality than the world of creaturely things. . . . Far more basic for him than any

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<sup>8</sup>Erich Fromm, The Heart of Man: It's Genius for Good and Evil (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 61.

conceptual scheme of the sequence of events was the fact of God's present reality to him and for him. That present reality meant that God was effectively active in the now.<sup>9</sup>

From Him we learn that to be a person requires voluntary commitment--a willingness to accept the responsibility for the development and expression of our unique potentials. It is through this commitment that our style takes form. We discover our potential, our relationships are transformed (self, others, God), we create our own unique contribution. We make choices from day to day in light of the ultimate choice we have already made.

This commitment, then, defines our freedom. However, we are not "to freedom condemned," but rather "to freedom freed." God did not manipulate Jesus into the expression of his unique potentials. The choice was always his. The Garden of Gethsemane experience testifies to this. The choice is always ours. Life does not just happen, nor does it remain absurd. Life is given by God and our commitment to Him not only gives meaning to our existence as we seek to actualize our potentials, but through this commitment our freedom is enhanced. Thus the Christian actualizing style goes beyond Maslow in his theory of self-actualization. This Christ-centered style involves not only the realization and expression of our

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<sup>9</sup>Cobb, op. cit., p. 116.



unique personal potentials, but calls us to something beyond ourselves. So, while we have our own elan, Jesus is our elan vital.

#### THE SYMBOL OF THE STYLE

Joy requires a symbol. Men have always employed symbols and imagery to bring to the fore the meaning of life. The pattern of life suggested by the Christian actualizing style is also best communicated by symbol.

The dance is one symbol for the Christian actualizing style. We have seen that Jesus not only is our model of the actualizing style by making us aware of the many facets of our uniqueness, but that he enspirits us as we participate in the process of actualization. Through commitment to life as it is revealed in Him we find the freedom to be the persons we are destined to be. The image of the dance symbolizes the integral quality of the characteristics of actualization (honesty, awareness, freedom, and trust) with the unique expression of the Christian actualizing style.

The essential quality of the dance which makes it an expressive symbol for the Christian actualizing style is spontaneous creative response. To move only in fixed patterns or stylized steps is to miss the meaning of the dance. While every dance has a distinctive pattern, to respond creatively to the music and rhythm is to know the

ultimate joy of dancing.

In the Christian actualizing style, we do not seek to control life--rather we respond to it. One never knows the joy of dancing simply by observing it. A total personal involvement in rhythm, sound, and movement is required. So with the Christian actualizing style. But how can we be honest? How can we trust another? How can we risk intimacy and self-disclosure? It is when we respond to life, involving ourselves in the dance, and seek to appropriate the style of the Christian actualizer, that we develop the capacity to respond to each new situation in freedom and trust. This spontaneity grows and develops as we consciously practice the actualizing way. But even in the beginning, we experience a freedom to move and be because we are not bound by the need to predict and control. This is possible because of our awareness of who we are and what life is all about.

Thomas C. Oden reminds us that human existence is characterized by three fundamental questions: (1) How do I fail to actualize the self I envision as true and good? (2) What new options for self understanding confront me through which I might perceive some new mode of self-fulfillment? (3) If such possibilities exist, how can they be actualized?<sup>10</sup> The Christian actualizing person is

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<sup>10</sup>Thomas C. Oden, Radical Obedience (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), p. 21.

aware of the conflicts in the polarities of his nature, and also the inherent possibilities. He has heard and seen the "word of possibility" in Christ, and therefore confronts these questions out of his relationship to Christ. It is this relationship which intensifies our awareness and enables us to respond to persons and situations spontaneously and creatively, rather than to react controllingly.

This spontaneity and creativity is the essence of the dance. The Christian actualizer responds to life by giving himself to life, the way the dancer gives himself to the dance. Jesus' life provides the model for creative and spontaneous relationships. The stern demands made of the rich young ruler were quite different than the understanding compassion shown the woman at the well.

By showing us our forgiveness and acceptance by God, Jesus enables us to cast off false pretensions and illusions and frees us to be more honest and spontaneous. He reminds us of the persons we truly can become and provides us the power to be those persons. Therefore, risk-taking involvement is part of the Christian actualizing style.

Because the actualizing person is in touch with, and can be honest about what he feels, thinks, is, and does, he gives of himself clearly, directly, specifically. He receives other persons' responses as a gift and an opportunity for learning and growing. He regards the

communications of others with wonder, awe, and acceptance, not as expressions of an enemy or a competitor. As he grows in the free expression of the Christian actualizing style, he responds creatively.

In the Christian actualizing style we contact our partners and we dance together. We have a deep feeling of identification with others. Jesus as our model is especially vivid here.

As we attempt to understand the character of Christian existence in the primitive community, the decisive point is that the personal God was known as inwardly present in such a way as to enhance and accentuate the sense of personhood.<sup>11</sup>

The deliberate self-giving of Jesus is one of his most unique characteristics.

The inter-personal dimension of our dance calls us to an expenditure of ourselves beyond the limits of calculation and rationality. When we know through Christ that we are loved by God, then we can love ourselves--and loving ourselves, we can then love others and identify ourselves with them, "rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep."

#### ENHANCING THE STYLE

One of the fundamental gestures of some dances is the embrace. We cannot offer a "one, two, three" for

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<sup>11</sup>Cobb, op. cit., p. 119.

developing the Christian actualizing style. I can simply say embrace it!

Paul Tillich sets the stage for this theme by saying: "The courage to be is the ethical act in which man affirms his own being in spite of these elements of his existence which conflict with his essential self-affirmation."<sup>12</sup> In the Christian actualizing style, we become conscious of our true self and, despite circumstances, our true self is not threatened. "Winning the game" is not essential to self-dignity and self-worth as it is in manipulative styles.

At the heart of this is the awareness that we are unique persons. This uniqueness is a gift of God. We have the power to accept it, cease backing away from it, and to busy ourselves being our potential. Fulfillment comes when we feel we are becoming what we have the possibility of becoming.

So it is with the actualizing person. He has the sense of fully living. Exercising the ultimate in courage, he discovers he is affirmed, performs the ethical act of affirming his own being, and life becomes a dance.

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<sup>12</sup>Paul Tillich, The Courage To Be (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 3.

## CHAPTER VI

### TOWARD AN ACTUALIZATION CENTERED CHURCH

A minister, seeking to build an actualizing church,  
puts the quest in perspective:

We are looking for a place  
where we can exercise trust in depth;  
where listening, receiving, and giving  
take place in a Communion.

We are looking for a place  
of genuine significance and identity,  
where life and people and vocation  
can be seen and experienced in proper perspective.

We are looking for a place  
where acceptance isn't earned by donning masks,  
where relationships are genuine,  
where struggle and faith are valid.

We long for a place  
which equips us together,  
for each other and for all others,  
to be alive in His life.

We are looking for a place  
where rich discipleship and experiments in faith  
bring us to the moment of truth  
when we say the "Yes" that counts!

We are looking for a place  
where silly, stupid, subtle religious images  
are challenged, surrendered, changed  
and placed at His feet where they belong!

We are looking for a place  
where the Person of Jesus Christ  
and every person  
can receive, from us, proper significance!

Where is that place?  
We are looking for a place like that, Jesus!<sup>1</sup>

Is there such a place? One person found it and  
told this writer of her experiences.

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<sup>1</sup>Hal Edwards, "Looking for a Place" (Cypress, California, 1966, Unpublished Manuscripts.)

Perhaps for the first time in my life, I was able to see myself, and I didn't like all I saw. I went to the group thinking I was a "confident Christian" only to discover that I was instead, rather smug and distant, more concerned with myself than with others. The warmth and love for one another that soon enveloped the entire group enabled me to shed this cocoon I had wrapped myself in, and I finally started to grow, both as a person and as a Christian.

Certain patterns have emerged that are worth sharing. No rigid recipe for the achievement of the yearner for characteristics of the poem will be presented. I turn now to institutional patterns that are dynamic and changing, about a style for the congregational life, as I have talked about style for individuals.

In the previous chapter it was noted that while we have our own elan, Jesus is our elan vital. Through one's ultimate commitment to life as one finds it revealed in Him, the style of the Christian actualizing person takes form. The pattern is this: One, we discover our potential; two, our relationships are transformed; three, we make our unique contribution. The Church can provide the setting and the relationships for this individual style to be realized, nurtured, and developed. Here is where we see some emerging patterns that claim our attention as we move toward an actualization centered church.

#### WORSHIP: "WE DISCOVER OUR POTENTIALS"

Whatever structure the church takes, worship must be a dynamic part of its life. Here the three levels of

awareness, self and self, self and others, self and God, are cultivated and celebrated. Here we discover our potentials as a person as we seek to explore the potentials of human existence, the heights and depths of the human spirit. We seek to loose these forces as we are empowered by the ultra-personal experience of worship. C. G. Jung once observed that "everyone's ultimate aim and strongest desire lie in developing the fullness of human existence that is called personality"<sup>2</sup>--a goal, as he points out, to be realized through the establishment of a personal relation with a power outside ourselves.

### Awareness

We long for a place  
which equips us together,  
for each other and for all others,  
to be alive in His life.<sup>3</sup>

Awareness, and the cultivation of it, is one of the chief ends of worship. Louise Lavelle described the particular genius of the saints as their ability to "lend inwardness to whatever event they meet." This is the depth of awareness that is cultivated in worship--an inwardness that experiences the many levels of reality. In the submission to the manipulative tentacles of our

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<sup>2</sup>Carl G. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1933), p. 83.

<sup>3</sup>Edwards, loc. cit.



culture the latent potentialities of consciousness remain buried, or at best, clumsily expressed. This is what Erich Fromm calls the "hypnotic passivity" of modern man.

This awareness has three dimensions, the discovery of a transcendent reality, a heightened sensitivity to the intra-personal, and the inter-personal experiences of the worshipper. In developing this awareness we are equipped together for each other and for all others. To be alive in His Life becomes a central act in actualizing worship. Samuel Miller calls the minister to operate with integrity as a celebrant in leading people in worship.

In the midst of this age, in the maelstrom of history in all its fury, in the muddled mess of this world, in the confusion and boredom and amazement, he ought to be able to pick out a glory to celebrate. There should be something somewhere hidden in the common day, by the plain speech of a plain man, to break the sky asunder, to ascend on high in song.<sup>4</sup>

### Community

We are looking for a place  
of genuine significance and identity,  
where life and people and vocation  
can be seen and experienced in proper perspective.<sup>5</sup>

What we are really looking for is community. O.

Hobart Mowrer has suggested that the popularity of existentialism and the ubiquity of the question "Who am I?"

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<sup>4</sup>Samuel Miller, The Dilemma of Modern Belief (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 108.

<sup>5</sup>Edwards, loc. cit.

indicates that we are entering, or perhaps are well into, an identity crisis, a moral and spiritual void.

This verdict derives from a manifest deterioration of ethical standards, preoccupation with sensuality and materialism, "waste-making", and "status-seeking", and the increasing incidence of what is generally called mental illness and other expressions of personal instability and disorganization.<sup>6</sup>

The answer to an identity crisis is a strong sense of community and commitment.

Actualizing worship provides this. Here one can confess his sins and shortcomings; he can experience in the fellowship the sense of forgiveness and acceptance; he can be inspired to make restitution; he can recover his self-respect and identity; he can discover his potential as a person as he moves away from the disastrously individualistic, independent, and isolated stance that is too characteristic of life, and find the unity and interdependence of community.

### Honesty

We are looking for a place  
where silly, stupid, subtle religious images  
are challenged, surrendered, changed  
and placed at His feet where they belong!<sup>7</sup>

The images, language, forms, and symbols of worship must be honest.

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<sup>6</sup>O. Hobart Mowrer, The New Group Therapy (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964), p. 14.

<sup>7</sup>Edwards, loc. cit.

In this time of violent passage various forms of the racial myths, with their intimations of the miraculous and the mysterious, have arisen to give us hope. The results--in justice, in humanity, genocide, assassination, reveal the inadequacy of this way out of our deep anxiety. Important too is the traditional wisdom enshrined in the liturgies of the church, for Christian worship has been demonized, transmuted from a witness against us to a means of our self-justification. In order to lead us in creating a new society, in sometime yet to come, the Christian liturgy or word and sacrament must be revived, purged of its demonic traits, filled again with the qualities which it is supposed to have.<sup>8</sup>

Actualization calls for a person to live fully in the now. Worship that simply calls the worshipper to retire from "this world" into "the other world" is a perversion.

What happens in worship must be understandable outside worship. No hocus-pocus liturgy, comprehended only by an inner circle, will fill this purpose. In religion, as well as in other areas, specialized jargon is used. Too often this jargon in all areas, and certainly in religion, is used as a crutch when communication is too difficult to wrestle with. No service of worship should ever conceal the faith and meaning of life in a language that cannot be understood by today's reader of the daily newspaper.

The dawning recognition of this is seen in the growth of lay academies which, among other things, search for the meaning of worship and how worship can be

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<sup>8</sup>Keith Watkins, Liturgies in a Time When Cities Burn (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 3.

celebrated, the introduction of folk music, drama, and art in worship services, the experimentation with dialogue sermons, new orders of worship, modern liturgies, and different avenues of congregation participation.

We bring to worship our real being in as deep a degree of honesty as is possible. Here we sharpen our commitments, deepen our sensitivity, test our self-interests and self-concepts, and examine our loves in relation to the image of reality--our ultra-personal experience of God.

#### PREACHING AND ACTUALIZATION

Since the worship experience on Sunday morning is the primary involvement of most Christians today, and for many, their only relationship to the Church, it is important that an actualizing style be developed specifically in relation to preaching.

There is a tendency in the "renewal movement" of the Church to minimize preaching. Some are even suggesting that we get rid of it altogether. We have sometimes used it as a technique of manipulation, and the manipulating minister has found in it a false ego-strengthening crutch which he has used in an authoritarian way. Yet, when rightly understood and practiced, preaching can be an actualizing expression on the part of the entire congregation and minister.

Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., says:

The sermon offers a minister one of his most valuable opportunities to enhance the mental and spiritual health of his people. Like group counseling, effective preaching offers an efficient means of helping a number of individuals simultaneously. From a mental health viewpoint, the sermon has both preventive and therapeutic potentialities. For relatively healthy persons it can stimulate personality growth and raise the general level of creativity. It can release strength within those who are struggling with a personal crisis. It can support those whose personality foundations are weak, and motivate some who are burdened to seek professional help.<sup>9</sup>

Dialogue with, and redemptive involvement in, the lives of people are essential if preaching is to have a significant place in the actualization-centered church. If the minister has walked with troubled persons on their inner journeys, and if members of the congregation have shared in each other's lives, then preaching will be deepened by the feeling for human problems.

A part of our preparation for speaking should be to find out what people bring to us in the way of questions, hypotheses, affirmations and doubts; and our communication, whether formal like a sermon or informal like a conversation, should include these as part of its content. Dialogical preaching requires the employment of the principle of inclusion. I am indebted to Martin Buber for my understanding of this principle. It means that when we address

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<sup>9</sup>Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., Mental Health Through Christian Community (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965), pp. 77-8.

another we do so in ways that include their meanings.

In his preaching, as in his total life, the responsibility of the minister is to enter into and attempt to foster the I-Thou relationship with his hearers. Since this is the way I believe God Himself approaches men and women, ministers cannot permit themselves to lose sight of it. Preaching, then, when it is actualizing becomes personal encounter.

The place of the sermon in worship does not need to be minimized. It needs to be made authentic. It is authentic when it presents a claim and a possibility to persons who are free in their response, and, as a result of the confrontation of claim and possibility with will, shared meaning results.

The goal of preaching is to open new doors, provide new insights, shed more light, and offer alternative courses of action. Above all, hearers should be called to make a definite response--definite, but free.

D. T. Niles calls the minister to his task in preaching when he says:

The preacher is not a performer, he is a witness; and somehow a connection must be established between him and those to whom he witnesses. He must belong to their world and they to his. It is said of Father Damien that he began his Sunday sermon to the lepers

among whom he lived with these words: "My Brethren." One Sunday his opening words were, "We lepers." He had entered their world.<sup>10</sup>

Using Niles' figure of speech, I would say that the minister who mistakenly sees his task as a performer is monological in his preaching. The one who sees himself as a witness is dialogical and actualizing. Reuel L. Howe, in The Miracle of Dialogue, talks of the "monological illusion."<sup>11</sup> This is the erroneous belief that communication occurs when people are told what they ought to know.

I am not suggesting here that in the worship service conversation has to take place between minister and people in the sense that he talks to them and they "talk back" to him in a verbal fashion. This may or may not be. I am suggesting that minister and laymen in an actualization-centered Church spend more time in efforts at creative communication. Browne Barr of Berkeley has shown one approach to this by having laymen actually share in his sermon preparation each week.

The dialogical preacher is able to talk in terms of everyday feelings, habits and inspirations, commonplace life situations. He is able to translate the formulations of a theological or psychological nature, because he knows

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<sup>10</sup>D. T. Niles, The Preacher's Calling to Be Servant (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), p. 19.

<sup>11</sup>Reuel L. Howe, The Miracle of Dialogue (New York: Seabury Press, 1963).

his people, he feels with them.

Bishop Quayle put the need for dialogue in this perspective:

When this preacher comes to a Sunday in his journey through the week, people ask him, "Preacherman, where were you and what saw you while the workdays were sweating at their toil?" And then of this preacher we may say reverently, "He opened his mouth and taught them saying." And there will be another though lesser Sermon on the Mount. And the auditors sit and sob and shout under their breath, and say with their helped hearts, "Preacher, saw you and heard you that? You were well employed. Go out and listen and look another week; but be sure to come back and tell us what you saw."<sup>12</sup>

Preaching in an actualization-centered Church is an experience of "shared meaning." It comes when there is core contact within the congregation and real dialogue takes place. Where there is no dialogue "the people perish." No core relationships, no actualization!

#### KOINONIA: "RELATIONSHIPS ARE TRANSFORMED"

Relationship is a common need of man to which the Church must always seek to respond. In recent years the different forms of "small groups" that have been cropping up in congregations across the country indicate an effort on the part of the Church to do just that. Prayer groups, study groups, encounter groups, supportive groups--and the list goes on and on--are all efforts to meet this need of

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<sup>12</sup>William A. Quayle, The Pastor-Preacher (Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, 1910), p. 371.



man to belong, to be accepted, to be forgiven, to be respected and loved. Here genuine communion "according to the measure of man's need" is sought.

Koinonia has become the key word in describing the experience that is sought in this "small group" movement. It is a New Testament Greek word describing the fellowship of the early Christians. It was not a spirit of fellowship, but a fellowship of the Spirit. By common need, common confession, common forgiveness, common acceptance, and common service, this fellowship became the force that amazed the first century world. It is this kind of fellowship that we seek as we moved toward an actualization-centered Church.

### Real Communion

We are looking for a place  
where we can exercise trust in depth;  
where listening, receiving, and giving  
take place in a Communion.<sup>13</sup>

A Christian actualization group became such a place for a young woman interviewed. She came into the group several months after a nearly successful suicide attempt.

Through a variety of experiences the members of the group were encouraged to share their struggles and become present to each other in caring community. In one session members of the group were asked to draw a picture of some

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<sup>13</sup>Edwards, loc. cit.

experience they had or a feeling about themselves. The young woman drew a series of pictures.

"This is me before I understood I was worth loving." Here she presented a dejected figure against a heavy background of black with chaotic lines superimposed over the figure.

"Because I didn't love myself, I thought no one else cared. I tried to kill myself. In the picture I am attempting to commit suicide." Here she shared a picture of a girl with a bottle of poison.

"In this picture there are persons who saved me from destroying my body. You are all in this next picture, because you have helped me to see that I am a worthwhile person who can have a meaningful life." The drawing here was of a group with smiling faces, lines indicating many-sided communications, and hands supporting each other.

"This next picture isn't very clear, and I don't exactly know what it means but I'd like to think I'm discovering that God is not a mean old judge who's down on me for the bad things I've done, but one who cares for me and wants me to be well." Here was only an abstract burst of color.

"These last two pictures sort of sum up where I have been and where I am now." She presented a girl in a coffin and in contrast a girl in a flowery meadow at the foot of a mountain trail.

"I see myself as being dead before, and alive now."

What is sought in the Koinonia of an actualizing congregation is real communion, real contact between real persons. It involves personal commitment in a dialogue between two "cores"--of two actualizing persons. This involves a trusting relationship of love and acceptance. In actualizing relationships the relationship is one of closeness, of touching. In manipulating relationships the relationship is one of distance and impersonal communication.

In chapter two reference was made to three levels of awareness: intra-personal, inter-personal, and ultra-personal. These three levels of experience form the basis for communion, for communion is a three-way relationship: self and self, self and others, self and God. This three-way process of relationship is essentially integrated. If one level is missing the others are limited.

Man's spiritual communion with others is uniquely his. This is the difference between an individual and a person: the individual associates, whereas the person communicates. To use Tournier's figure, this is the difference between the personage and the person: the personage is an external appearance which touches the personage of others from outside, the person communicates inwardly with the second person, the "thou."

This communion is a fragile thing and must be

developed in each relationship at each meeting. When we experience it, we feel a transparency of relationship--we invite others into our most intimate world and we enter into theirs. With most people this kind of contact is rare and difficult to establish. The more actualizing we are, the easier, and more natural it becomes. One experience of communion equips us for the possibility of other experiences upon which we are constantly building.

### Core Relationships

Genuine relationships are experienced on a "one to one" basis and are possible primarily in small groups. As we move toward an actualization-centered Church we seek to provide various opportunities for communion in these groups. To be effective the participants are reminded that they must be honest and open--as well as caring and committed to the growth and enhancement of each other's lives. Core relationships, being with being, thou with thou, and thou with Thou are possible here. Experiences are no longer casual and superficial, but deep and meaningful.

Is it possible that we can do something, or be something that will enable others to emerge? Should we simply be with others to assuage their loneliness in their time of struggle, or, by the transparency of our being, the revealing of ourselves, can we provide them light?

Bernard Martin answers this question with superb insight and sensitivity as he closes the record of his own spiritual pilgrimage in this direction.

I now realize that to heal a man includes more than protecting him from destruction. It is also to provide him with the possibility of pursuing his path, to lead him to progressive blossoming of his person, to return to him the capability of living. I also know that to accomplish this sacred task, one must himself be a living person, really and authentically.<sup>14</sup>

In Koinonia "where relationships are genuine, where struggle and faith are valid," we are led and we lead others to a progressive blossoming of their personhood. The capability of living is restored. Guilt and forgiveness, our most basic concerns and that which is central in the church's proclamation, are faced and experienced. The clamoring question of the possibility of human existence is raised, and, beyond that, the possibility of being fully human and fully Christian is confronted.

MISSION: "WE MAKE OUR UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION"

We are looking for a place  
where rich discipleship and experiments in faith  
bring us to the moment of truth  
when we say the "Yes" that counts!<sup>15</sup>

Actualizing worship and Koinonia enables us to celebrate the three levels of our experience, and it leads

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<sup>14</sup>Bernard Martin, If God Does Not Die (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966), p. 79.

<sup>15</sup>Edwards, loc. cit.

us into "rich discipleship and experiments in faith." It brings us to the moments of truth when we say "Yes" to life.

In worship and in Koinonia the confrontation that is ours at the three levels of our experience calls us to greater and deeper involvement in life and in the world. Yet, this involvement is always one of free response. It must never be coercion by the church--nor should it be the drudgery of "keeping of the law," but rather the free movement of a person who responds to life and accepts responsibility for life. To evade this response and responsibility is fatal. It means self-defeat for the person and for the congregation. The noted historian of Greece, Edith Hamilton, stated the challenge as she wrote of the decline of Athens, "When the freedom they wished for most was freedom from responsibility, then Athens ceased to be free and was never free again."<sup>16</sup>

Involvement in life and the world characterizes the actualization-centered church. To become aware of, and to celebrate the three levels of our experience in worship and Koinonia, leads us to daily involvements in the life of people where we are to function as agents of loving reconciliation.

A sort of "heart-hardening" has set in upon most of

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<sup>16</sup>Edith Hamilton, The Greek Way (New York: Norton, 1942), p. 143.

us. Though more and more we are coming to be a "welfare state" and on the face of it such a state is built upon the foundation of human caring, there is still a disturbing atrophy of the human spirit. In one of the chapters of his book, Grace and the Searching of Our Heart, Charles R. Stinnette, Jr., has asked a scathing question, "Who cares in a world of caretakers?" He makes a penetrating commentary on the caretaker attitude:

The truth is there where the caretaker attitude prevails, man is reduced to a cipher. His needs are supplied, but human response is neither given nor evoked. In such a climate it appears that the food or good which one is able to provide by the wizardry of his technology becomes a kind of magic which is substituted for human concern which might have been given. The personhood of both the dispenser and the recipient is robbed by such an attitude. Indeed, the responsible person is prevented from ever reaching maturity. The person becomes a commodity, and his eternal soul acquires a price tag.<sup>17</sup>

One of the deepest needs in life is to care lovingly, and this loving care must be communicated personally and intimately. To be cared for is an equally deep need and cannot be satisfied but by personal involvement. Our own humanity is defaced if we do not respond.

### Focus and Spontaneity

Increasingly some churchmen are learning that they must reject trying to do everything and focus upon what is

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<sup>17</sup>Charles R. Stinnette, Jr., Grace and the Searching of Our Heart (New York: Association Press, 1962), p. 46.

most needed in the moment. As a symbol of this understanding, the leaders of one Christian actualization group begin their meetings in this way: holding the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other, the leader says, "Brother, God is speaking to us through these sources. Let us hear and respond to what God is saying."

The story of the flood in San Felipe, Mexico, in September of 1967, was read by people in this group. Their response was spontaneous. They mobilized the community and within a few days truck loads of clothing and food were on the way to this washed-out fishing village. The world and the Word determined the mission of the church.

#### Diakonia--"Serving"

At the heart of the Gospel is another word as important as the word koinonia. It is diakonia. Originally it was a word without glamor and must have meant something like "serving at tables." The New Testament provides a series of variations on one theme: here was One who came not to be served, but to serve. He was "the man for others," though he also appreciated the gracious service of others. That Jesus came not to be served is nothing new; that idea can be found most any place. But that he deliberately came to serve--this is fresh and unique.

So the word diakonia indicates the pattern of life



of those who would follow Jesus. They are servants. In this sense, they are other-directed. The three levels of awareness are in balance in their life. For them the ancient and modern power game holds no charm. They cease to dominate, to control, and to manipulate. Even without deliberation they may find themselves ministering to others.

Historically the same thing has happened to this concept of diakonia in the church as has happened to the "caretaker" concept in modern society. J. C. Hoekendijk in The Church Inside Out has capsuled this deterioration of meaning:

This is what also happened to the deacon. He entered the tunnel as a waiter, only to come out as an assistant to the bishop--a near-priest. He had been neatly clericalized. He had been removed from behind the backs of the table guests and been placed somewhere at the head of the table. And that is where he still sits in our churches, as a respectable displaced person. The intentions were no doubt good. In the meantime, the effects were fatal. The deacon moved from the street, where he belonged, to the altar space and the front bench, where from then on he would only symbolize service. The solidarity became spiritualized, detached from the sphere of direct physical contact. When we behold the dress of deacons (the dalmatic among the Catholics and the black suits in many Protestant churches), it becomes immediately apparent that here only the depiction of an idea is meant. In this uniform no one will recognize the livery of people who are available, ready to do some down-to-earth labor.<sup>18</sup>

The actualization-centered church must seek to recover for

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<sup>18</sup>J. C. Hoekendijk, The Church Inside Out (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), pp. 148-9.

modern man the concept of diakonia, the idea of spontaneous service.

Not only must we see ourselves as "servants" of others, we must be actualizing as was Jesus in receiving the ministry of others. We have discovered that many Christians are uneasy, and even have real guilt feelings when they are the recipients rather than the givers of gifts. While the statement of Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," is true, paradoxically it is also true that it may be more difficult to receive than to give.

The actualizing Christian has his polarities in balance: giving and receiving are natural expressions of his style. "She has done a beautiful thing," Jesus said of the woman who "wasted" costly perfume on his feet. He was a gracious receiver as well as a gracious giver.

We are speaking of many gifts here, such as understanding, appreciation, acceptance, concern, comfort, and others. The person who says, "It was nothing," when he has given himself to another is a thief. He robs himself of the joy of receiving the gratitude and appreciation of another, and, in turn, robs the other of the fulfillment that could have come from expressing his true feelings of thankfulness. We minister by giving and by receiving.

This, then, is the rhythm of the actualizing church: worship, koinonia, diakonia. Worship should have the

characteristics of koinonia, but perhaps more important in our day of "big" churches, worship should inspire the worshipper to find the place where koinonia might be experienced. Koinonia, in turn, makes one sensitive to his need to return to the community of worshippers, and also to move out in involvement in mission. Diakonia, entered into by free response, becomes the expression of accepted responsibility on the part of the congregation and the individual. Involved in diakonia the person senses more keenly the need for the inspiration and strength that is gained in worship and koinonia. The pattern of the actualizing congregation is incomplete unless opportunities for these three experiences are provided. The rhythmic life of the individual within an actualizing congregation is one of movement among these three expressions of one's commitment: worship, koinonia, diakonia.

We are looking for a place  
 where the Person of Jesus Christ  
 and every person  
 can receive, from us, proper significance!  
 Where is that place?  
 We are looking for a place like that, Jesus!<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Edwards, loc. cit.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CHRISTIAN ACTUALIZATION GROUP

In the previous chapters the problem and alternatives of manipulation and actualization for modern man have been seen in the context of the Church. A crucial question now is, can a person traverse the continuum from manipulation to actualization? If so, how?

In Man the Manipulator the therapeutic method was presented. In this paper a way in which it is practiced in the context of the Christian Church is described. Our primary vehicle for the journey is the Christian actualization group. A Christian actualization group is one in which the persons involved are self-consciously followers of Christ and are relating their faith as they deal with the principles of actualization. There may be actualizing Buddhists, Hindus, or agnostics. Any person has the potential for freedom, trust, honesty, and awareness. The uniqueness of the Christian actualization group is that it has the person of Jesus Christ and the historical experience of the Christian Church as a co-focus with the principles of actualization. The idea of such a group is not a new thing. It is as old as the Church.

A quick survey of the history of the Christian Church verifies this. The early Church, in its dynamic,

was a small group movement akin to some of our modern small group efforts.<sup>1</sup> The common commitment of the group resulted in honest sharing at the level of the best group therapy of today. Personal confession and honest encounter were a primary part of the community. So unique in this respect was the early Church that the Greek word koinonia best characterized it.

This koinonia way of life--the spirit of loving, caring, and sharing--which was referred to in the preceding chapter, was the dimension that gave the early Church its strong personal impact. It was this kind of life that found expression in the exuberance and joy and love that was so novel and arresting. Those who observed the early Christians could not understand it and some said, "See how these men love one another."

With the growth of the Church, the institutionalizing of it, (the cessation of public, and the introduction of private confession) and the formalizing of worship, this powerful dimension of koinonia was lost to a great degree. O. Hobart Mowrer in The New Group Therapy suggests that, "the impact of group therapy in modern day psychology and the growth and dynamic of communism in its

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<sup>1</sup>O. Hobart Mowrer, The New Group Therapy (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964), p. 43.

'cell' structure is a result of this loss."<sup>2</sup>

I am suggesting here, along with many others, that the modern Church must again recover this way of koinonia--this way of intimacy and sharing--by having actualization-centered groups akin to those of the early Church, if it is to again develop the spirit that characterized the early Church. For us today koinonia is at least the integration of the spirit of actualization into the total Church. When koinonia is present in the Church, the three levels of awareness--the intra-personal, the inter-personal, and the ultra-personal--can be lived out in relationships.

The "small group" movement in the Church has gained momentum during the past ten years.<sup>3</sup> The Christian actualization group is an effort to add to this momentum and to experiment with ways of adding meaning and depth to it.

While the Christian actualization group is not simply an effort to bring group therapy into the Church, it is a deliberate attempt to use the process of group dynamics to wed the unique functions of minister and psychologist for the purpose of valuing, self-discovery,

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>3</sup>Clyde Reid, "The Crucial Role of Small Groups," Pastoral Psychology, XVIII (March, 1967).

and self-commitment. The most fruitful experiences have come when minister and therapist worked together; this, however, is not to preclude growth in actualization in any group wherever certain dynamics of relationships are responded to. Here, however, the dynamics of the Christian actualization group is our concern.

#### THE BEGINNING OF A CHRISTIAN ACTUALIZATION GROUP

Christian actualization groups begin as a result of ministers and laymen feeling the need to recover or to be part of the koinonia aspect of the Church. Interviews reveal such groups began as a result of close personal and professional relationship. Sensing the possibility of this dynamic for the life of the Church, the minister extends invitations from the pulpit for people to experiment in such a relationship.

When those who respond come together something like the following introduction might be made:

The minister might describe the spirit of koinonia that characterized the early Church as the first Christians met together in small groups. The constituency of the group will determine how extensive this would be. This is an attempt to help us experience the vitality of the early Church. The psychologist is introduced as one who would assist in leading the actualization group.

The psychologist would then outline some of the basic rules for the actualization group. A mimeographed sheet should be prepared and given to each person. Introducing these the psychologist might say: "Basically, we would like you to attend to two principles. (1) That you make all your expressions in the here and now. Don't talk about the past or the future--talk only about what you feel is going on inside you now. Be absolutely honest with one another. What you feel on the inside, say it. The key phrase is WIGO (what is going on); be sure to share what you feel is going on. (2) That you speak only about your feelings, not your ideas. This is not a philosophy group. We want to be experience-centered and talk primarily about how we feel about ourselves, and how we feel about others in the group."

After such an introduction, the group usually has little or no trouble expressing itself. The group meets weekly and at the beginning of each meeting the leader will summarize what has taken place in the previous meetings, the direction the group seemingly is seeking to go, and ask for response to it. He will encourage persons in the group to relate to each other on the basis of expressed needs. Always the characteristics of manipulation and actualization are focused upon. This is adequate stimulation for the full function of the group.



The functions of the minister and psychologist will be described later in this chapter.

#### GUIDES FOR THE CHRISTIAN ACTUALIZATION GROUP

There are many churches where it may be impossible for a psychologist and a minister to work together in leading a group. It is possible for groups, without this kind of leadership, to function in an actualizing way. Group leadership training is available through private psychologists, universities, and centers like The Institute of Therapeutic Psychology in Santa Ana, California.

On the West Coast, particularly, sensitivity training which equips leaders of groups is available. Pioneered and presented by the University of California at Los Angeles, the small sensitivity training group provides an opportunity to experience oneself more fully in relations with others. The goal is to get a more accurate image of oneself as an instrument in interpersonal relations in order to free oneself to function more effectively in those relations, without being excessively burdened by unrealistic assumptions about one's personal adequacy, one's worth or social acceptability. The research on sensitivity training is not all positive, yet personal experience and other research tells us that some individuals have received great help.

Not too unlike the Christian actualization group in its dynamics, sensitivity training provides the opportunity to:

- learn more about oneself and one's impact on others
- understand one's own feelings and how they affect one's behavior toward others
- become more sensitive to the ways people communicate with each other
- learn "active listening"--for meanings and for feelings
- learn how people affect groups and groups affect people
- learn how one can help groups function more effectively.

In my experience certain fundamental principles have enabled groups to function in an actualizing way. These principles, along with the content of this chapter, help individuals involve themselves on the feeling level and can be used in any group process. They are:

1. One should always use "I," never "them, they, we, you, us," etc.  
 "I feel."  
 "I think."  
 "I am."
2. One should avoid but, although, because  
 "I feel hurt today," not . . . "because I was hurt by my husband."  
 "I don't like you," not . . . "but I don't like people like you."
3. Attempt to verbalize feelings and thoughts in the here-and-now situation. Even past and future experiences should be expressed in the present:  
 "I feel tense," not . . . "I was driving here to-night and felt terrible" Feel terrible now!
4. When addressing a fellow group member, one should talk to him directly, eye-to-eye contact, and not use third person when relating to him, "I like you," not "I like him."
5. One should be constantly aware of what one's body wisdom is saying. One should listen to tensions, boredom, joys, etc., and communicate these to the

group. This is best done by listening to one's voice.

6. When one is spoken to, one should listen intently to what is said and with what feeling it is being expressed. Some people only listen, one should try to listen and hear.
7. The one question that should not be asked is "Why?" For example, if someone expresses caring, don't ask why! One should be responsive to the other person. How do you feel when this person cares for you?

For us moderns koinonia is the integration of the spirit of actualization into the total Church. The three levels of awareness, the intra-personal, the inter-personal, and the ultra-personal, are lived out in relationships.

#### ROLE OF THERAPIST AND MINISTER

The therapist is trained to observe and describe the various patterns of manipulation or neurotic interaction that take place between members of the group. The minister can act as a catalyst for confession and expression on the part of the group members and also provides a theological frame of reference.<sup>4</sup> Encouraging self-disclosure or confession of misdeeds or guilts is also important. But both minister and psychologist must also be willing to disclose himself as a person and not as a

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<sup>4</sup>Edward Thurneysen, A Theology of Pastoral Care (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1962).

"professional" detached from the group.<sup>5</sup> In order for the minister to be this participant-observer, training is required and such training is being made available today. The emphasis of actualization groups is on helping persons to change, but this process of change is a continuous process and not once-and-for-all as in earlier concepts of conversion. Each meeting of the group is a new opportunity for a different form of re-birth.

In a Christian actualization group both the minister and psychologist are present. These men make their unique contributions to the business of valuing. A major premise is that actualization groups "value the process of valuing." A value we define as an emotionally charged idea to which an individual commits himself. All persons have either implicit or explicit values and the purpose of the actualization group is to help each person clarify, refine, and make more explicit, his value system. A minister, in effect, is a "proclaimer of values." A psychologist is an "evaluator of values." All values need to be tested against five existing frames of reference.

1. Organismic. For example, in Christian actualization groups, a person may say, "but I don't get angry." Then the therapist or minister may say, "You say that you are not angry about being challenged and yet your fists show that you are angry." Here one's

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<sup>5</sup>Sidney Jourard, The Transparent Self (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964).

organism (body) is used as the criterion for testing the validity of his declared values.

2. Scientific. You say that you believe that you shouldn't express strong feelings and yet science shows that if you don't, you can develop psychosomatic symptoms. We seek always to help persons examine the myths by which they live.

3. Societal. You say that you don't believe in divorce and yet our society today accepts divorce when the relationship has become destructive and unfulfilling. Here we put into focus conflicts in society which all must face.

4. Group. You say that you are always kind and yet the group concurs that you are often hostile and angry. The group becomes a mirror of what one really is.

5. Spiritual. You say that you are glad that you are humble, but Jesus said that you must be careful not to become proud of your humility.

The goal of the Christian actualization group is to create self-expression of the person and to help him grow in the valuing process.

The dynamics of the group have to do with the process of re-evaluating and expanding the values of an individual. The minister is able to proclaim religious values and to help re-interpret values which are presently held. The psychologist examines manipulative and neurotic assumptions. No values are accepted as self-evident and axiomatically true. Many of us have accepted values as a result of expediency or accidents, or because of slavish identification with others whom we have admired or hated during our lives. In the Christian actualization group there are no "sacred cows." Thus value-evaluation requires intensive analysis of ideas and feelings which have been held uncritically in the past. It requires that the individual veritably "chew over" these ideas until they

have become personally meaningful.

The psychologist and the minister are more like resource persons than answer givers. Group members are encouraged to risk disagreeing and expressing values of their own, rather than simply agreeing with the values of the minister or psychologist. The task of the minister and psychologist is to create a situation of freedom where individuals are encouraged to respond freely rather than to regurgitate ideas which have been given them, or feelings that are considered safe and appropriate by other authorities. Out of this an internalized personal value system can develop. It will not be a finished product, but developmental in a sense that the person can remain open to changing his values as he grows and understands the issues of life more deeply. This leads to personal commitment as the individual develops awareness of his value system.

The minister and psychologist consciously and deliberately seek to avoid threats or demands or leading. Rather, each expresses personal values and encourages others to do the same. Therefore, the purpose of the group is (1) to describe values and behaviors which seem to be held and practiced implicitly by the members, (2) to view these ideas and behaviors ever against certain alternatives, and (3) to discover inconsistencies in currently

held values.

The process of the Christian actualization group is to help each person become increasingly aware of himself, others, and God. This is not achieved primarily by lectures or preaching. Awareness is an experience, not an explanation. Becoming aware is never fully achieved.

### THE PROCESS OF AWARENESS

The process of actualization therapy can be thought of as a progression in awareness. In the context of the Church this progression moves through three levels of awareness: self and self, self and others, self and God. The following is a description of the dynamic of the process.

#### Confronting the Self

In the Christian actualization group, therapist and minister first of all observe. As each person talks each expresses a pattern which may be described as his "style" of life. For example, a person in a group may demonstrate his attempt at Christianity in one or two major ways: by being active or passive. The active Christian may take the stance of the "heavy" attempting to dictate to other members of the group what is "right." He may become the critic, judging the Church, others, and the minister. There is also the calculator who schemes to maintain

control of the group by conniving.

The passive Christian plays the reverse game, There is the "good" Christian who always does what he is asked. There is the "humble" Christian who depreciates himself and finds virtue in his unworthiness. There is the "protector" who "sacrifices" himself unselfishly for the good of "others"--always giving but never asking. There is the "clinging vine" who sits helplessly by, waiting to be fed and taken care of by the Church. ("Oh, Reverend, you don't know how much I need you and the Church!")

Working corporately the psychologist and minister observe and describe the manipulative patterns. Each person in the group is given a chance to be confronted with his individual self-defeating pattern.

Looking back upon this "forced" confrontation, one person wrote:

I still tend to act God-like, feeling that, although I might be helping some people, I am hurting others. I tend to take the responsibility for other people's feelings and behavior. But, the actualization experience has made me aware that I do this. There now exists the possibility that I can do something about it. . . .

Without this awareness, there could be no hope of change and no growth.

As part of the process of confrontation, an important function of the leaders is to assist members of the group in becoming aware of the neurotic "gains" they are



obtaining from using manipulative styles or games.<sup>6</sup> For example, active manipulations have a coercive controlling value--the pay-off is that a sense of power is achieved by playing the "top-dog." The lay person who plays the "deacon" in the Church (assigned or assumed) can get a great sense of power from his assumed superiority over other members of the group. The psychologist and minister in their confrontation help him to become aware of the feelings of glee he is experiencing when controlling others. The goal of the actualization process is to help the person become aware of the short-range pay-off of his manipulative tendencies.

In contrast to the active manipulator, the passive manipulator can be helped to see the short-range gain of his seductive manner. The "sweet mother of the Ladies' Aid" whose motto is "service above self" must be confronted by her secret pay-off from her miserable martyrdom. In the group she is asked, "What do you get from playing this game?" This may be the first time she faces her secret feelings of "righteous omnipotence." She must be confronted with this until she realizes that her gains from this are short-ranged and unfulfilling.

In real confrontation the manipulator sees that in

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<sup>6</sup>Eric Berne, Games People Play (New York: Grove Press, 1964).

the short-range he does win a pay-off, but in the long run he really loses by his self-defeating manipulations.

### Restoring the Inner Balance

In the group change takes place when the individual becomes fully aware of the foolishness of his manipulative roles. In order for him to come to this awareness, he must not only be confronted, he must experience inwardly the absurdity of his manipulative style. One person confessed becoming aware of the gap between what he thought he was and what he actually was.

With the help of the group I became aware that I had been fooling myself for years about the kind of person I was. I lived in the past and the future. I needed to discover how to live fully in the present. Being goal oriented, I had never allowed myself the joy of struggling to discover myself.

I began to see that with my wife I had the pattern of playing under-dog, weakling and clinging vine. To compensate for my inadequacies, I resorted to playing judge and also attempted to control my wife through increased sexual demands. Often I have manipulated so as not to have to take risks with my feelings.

Many times change does not take place without some embarrassment. In another day this may have been called "conviction of sin."

Example: A wife is condemningly talking of her husband's infidelity. The psychologist insists that she play the role of the "judge" condemning him.

Wife: "Repent! . . . you know that you have committed adultery and have sinned against your wife and God."

I'm going to see that you get your just punishment. I will see to it that you will not get away with it."

Psychologist: "Could you substitute the word 'grow' for 'not get away with it'?"

Dawning recognition came as she realized her own failure.

The group realized that she saw herself as a condemning manipulative judge whose sole interest was retribution, rather than change. A sermon in this case may have been futile. Rather than being "told" the truth, the woman actually experienced it. One principle of the actualization group is change comes through experience, not explanations.

In restoring the inner balance the expression of the opposite polarity is often necessary. After inwardly experiencing the foolishness of being the manipulative judge that she was, the woman was asked to play the "protector" and feel her responsibility for the sin of her husband in an extreme way. In playing this out, she said, "I hate to admit this, but I am responsible for your sin. I have had a lover, too. My lover was the League of Women Voters. Rather than being at home with you, I was out with my lover." Here the woman is exaggerating her guilt, yet this is sometimes necessary to bring into perspective and "restore the inner balance" between the judge and the

protector.

The fundamental idea here is that any exaggerated manipulation reveals the repression of its opposite. The "deacon" playing the dictator game may be covering up an unwillingness to face his softness and his need for tenderness. The "sweet martyr mother" may be avoiding the expression of her needs to be aggressive and hostile. The "clinging vine" who depends so heavily on the Church and the minister may be at a deeper level, the calculator who controls those who serve her. Her implicit message is, "by acknowledging your greatness I have the right to demand your services day or night."

When the individual within the group experiences these polarities he is ready for another step in the process of awareness.

### Accepting Conflict As a Means to Integration

The goal of the group is to help a person realize that he need not completely reject his manipulative behavior. Traditionally some churches have said that one is to repress all negative attitudes and cease all negative behavior. This results in a constricting "don't do it yourself" program and becomes bondage to law. Too often the expression of fears, doubts, and sin has had no place in the life of those committed to Christianity. The expectation of manipulative religion has been that

only joy, victory, and peace be the expressed message.

In the Christian actualization group conflict is appreciated and valued, rather than denied. The open awareness of one's manipulations is a major step to actualization. Once we are aware of the self-defeating nature of our manipulations, we can begin to see the possibility and the need to change. When we fall back into our manipulative patterns we are even more sensitive to our plight of inner conflict. Paradoxically, "the accepting of the inner conflict between our self-defeating manipulations and our actualizing potentials is the way of integration."<sup>7</sup> "Backsliding" is accepted not as failure, but an inevitable part of a continuing process of growth.

One of the recent trends in psychotherapy has been to study the lives of self-actualized persons which are used as models of personal health. Maslow has suggested that the study of lives like Lincoln, Schweitzer, Ghandhi, and the like, enables us to see the golden threads that make for full human functioning.<sup>8</sup> In the Christian actualization group the primary model for actualization is Jesus. During the second or third session the minister

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<sup>7</sup>Everett Shostrom (Santa Ana, 1966. Unpublished Manuscripts.)

<sup>8</sup>Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1962), p. 12.

presents ways in which Jesus Christ can help us to freedom, trust, honesty, and awareness. The life, mission, and message of Jesus is presented not in biographical form, but as kerygma. Christianity becomes most manipulative when dogma is made central. The actualization therapists of today are in the tradition of those who have championed person-centeredness and help the modern man recover the validity of a person-centered faith as opposed to a dogma-centered one.

In contrast to the self-actualized person who has achieved maximum effectiveness by common historical agreement, the actualizing person is one who is moving toward personal fulfillment. One of the values of group therapy in its best form is the association with self-actualizing persons who have achieved a measure of spiritual psychological health. In a Christian actualization group such people are "actualizing evangelists" who provide by their spontaneous expression and personal sharing inspiration for Christian growth. Implicit in the relationships of the group is the experience of acceptance and forgiveness which limits fear and provides freedom.

#### DIMENSIONS OF INVOLVEMENT

A measure of the value of the Christian actualization group is the involvement that ensues. There are two

primary dimensions of this involvement.

### Personal

When the group is fulfilling its function, the members are warm, human, and interested in one another. This requires objectivity about one's self and subjectivity in expression and relationship. Too often the Church has not provided the actualizing experience necessary for escape from the octopus-like tentacles of manipulation because this "personal" element was missing.

When this is the case, the person in need of actualization finds himself a stranger among strangers. The Spirit acts in the actualization groups to unlock the doors, to free men from alienation and estrangement through personal relationships open to the Spirit's working.

By this experience one can know that he is known and accepted by God as he is. The limiting fear of self-sharing is overcome; the need to remain hidden is lessened. It is possible to have one's needs to pretend lessened.

This kind of involvement does mean that each person who is in such a group is in a position to hurt the other. And often real hurt is necessary before we can change. The wound has to be exposed before healing can come. The exposure of the wound is often the most painful

experience.

### Authentic Caring

The other essential dimension of involvement in the Christian actualization group is authentic caring. This we distinguish from the "love game" that characterizes so many of our superficial relationships today.

In the Christian actualization group authentic caring is seen as a possibility instead of these substitutes for love. This is done by growth in replacing uncommitted casualness with intimate concern. Directness of expression, involvement with the real needs of persons in the group, the shared power of hurting and healing, all characterize this relationship.

This authentic caring kind of love expressed in the actualizing relationship is not to be misconstrued as something soft and not something demanding. For love to be redemptive and therapeutic it has to be demanding and expectant. Also, it must be remembered that active love sometimes requires expression of angry and hostile feelings as well as warm and "loving" feelings. The actualization process requires that conflict, rather than simply passive acceptance, be a part of the process. It may be that this is the one principle that has been missing in the "small group movement of the Church" until now.

The Christian actualization group is a



self-conscious effort at growth in which the individual takes responsibility for his own development. The group also provides the setting where one's Christian commitment can be up-dated, or where an initial commitment can take place. Though the sharing of fulfillment and the confession of sin and failure, along with the experience of forgiveness, are of great impact, the area of emphasis in the Christian actualization group is primarily conscious intentions and actual behavior in the present.

In relationships in the group one is measured by one's participation, not one's intentions. Increased awareness and a deeper commitment in one's faith is the key to the possibility of change in one's actions. Involvement in social action will be one result of authentic caring.

One area to which we need to relate the Christian actualization group is evangelism. My term for evangelism is "Christian expression." The Church has sometimes proclaimed an evangelism which has been construed to mean "planned, programmed, deliberate witnessing." Not always, but often, this has led to a practice of professional, manipulative witnessing. Witness of this type uses a technique which reduces the non-Christian to an object. Religion is "sold" as the proposed convert is manipulated into buying the product. Implicit in this technique is

the motif of a "top-dog" convincing an inferior "under-dog" of his superior way of life.

Christian expression is an alternative to this model. The Christian actualization group is a setting where Christian expression is fostered, and individuals are trained in spontaneous sharing. The difference that results is that of the "personal sharer" as opposed to the "professional witness."

#### THE GROUP AS AN INSTRUMENT OF PASTORAL CARE

One of the principles of the Christian actualization group is that pastoral care belongs to the entire Church and not just to the ordained minister.<sup>9</sup> All too often the minister has been placed in the role of paid carer. He has exclusive responsibility to minister to the sick, dying, and disturbed persons who come within the province of the Church. This heresy has been proclaimed and practiced by the Church until some have accepted it as the proper mode of Christian ministry.

The actualization group can help move both minister and laity away from the one-man-show game that they have been playing. As the principles of actualization are lived out in the group, each member moves from the need to

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<sup>9</sup>Philip A. Anderson, "The Group Member Becomes a Servant," Pastoral Psychology, XV (June, 1964).

receive ministry to the ability to give ministry as well.

The actualization group helps to uncover the potential within many individuals in the Church to really be agents of reconciliation and love. One of the significant discoveries in the pilot actualization groups is the recognition on the part of the minister that he is ministered to by the group and by individuals within it.

In the relationship of love and acceptance of the group the legitimate gifts of all can be called forth and persons become sensitive to these gifts within themselves. In the actualizing relationship each one is trained in the effective exercise of his gifts. One person wrote of her experience in a group:

How could one go to Church for fifteen years-- seeing the same people Sunday after Sunday and realizing nothing more than a casual, "Good morning," a trite, "How are you?" or an indifferent, "What's new?" This question has plagued me as I have participated in a Christian actualization group and have experienced the joy of really caring for others and the warmth of being cared for myself.

In this group, which is different from anything I have participated in before, we have come to know and care for each other as we have gradually revealed ourselves and our feelings to each other.

I am now aware that some of my past experiences and my desperate feelings of guilt as a result of them, have been the keys to my growth in the Christian actualization group. I have discovered a tremendous new freedom in having the courage to reveal my "bad side" and still be accepted and valued by the other members of the group.

In our sessions the walls of self and collective hypocrisy came tumbling down as we attempted to be real to each other, rather than just neutrally nice. In this experience I have discovered a real acceptance of me as a person.

The Christian actualization group cares enough to encourage a person to be who he really is so that he can move on to what he should become. It is not rigid in its expectations of its members; it is not easily shocked or provoked. Its closeness springs not from a shallow level of conventionality, but from the rock bottom honesty that gets beneath the level of hiding.

Because of these ground rules mutual support is provided, and an individual's sense of personhood is enhanced. When he is known and appreciated for his real self, when not only his name, but some of his innermost feelings and attitudes and problems are known, and yet he is loved and accepted, he begins to sense the preciousness of his unique humanity. In these ways the actualization group leads to an actualizing style of life in contrast to a manipulative style of life.

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